

After Spring Festival, Luoping becomes a sea of fragrant, golden flowers.

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Immendorff is one of the most significant, as well as controversial, contemporary German artists.

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"We compare ourselves to ants, each has very limited resources and abilities, but together we can do big things."

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## International Media Shines Spotlight on China

By Annie Wei

While crowds of foreign correspondents converged on Beijing last week to report on meetings of China's top two political bodies, the National People's Congress and the Chinese Peoples Political Consultative Conference, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) went a step further, broadcasting a special China Week coverage from March 7 to 13.

The special was a week of themed news reports and programs exploring China, involving more than 60 journalists and program makers visiting seven cities and many rural locations to gather material and highlight some of the major economic and social changes in China in recent times, according to the BBC's website.

Li Wen, from the BBC World Service told *Beijing Today* Wednesday that the BBC's audience all over the world have a great interests in China's economic growth and social development, and the whole world's attention to China is increasing. He also pointed out that the coverage of China in western media is increasing, and the BBC does not want to be let behind.

By January 2005, there were 449 registered foreign journalists from 44 countries in China, according to the Foreign Press in China handbook, published by the Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Of these 358 are based in Beijing, 82 in Shanghai, four in Chongqing and five in Guangdong Province.

David Barboza, a *New York Times* journalist based in Shanghai, told *Beijing Today* Wednesday that in recognition of China's growing importance internationally, the paper now had five journalists working full-time in China, the highest number ever. From his point of view, most western media is interested in politics and business, such as how the government operates and how business is doing here.

Li Wen said, "The BBC has done many reports on China in the past, but such an in-depth, comprehensive and wide-ranging program as this is a first."

To highlight the China Week, BBC filmed its flagship political debate program *Question Time* in Shanghai on March 10. The fact that Shanghai's Municipal Foreign Affairs Office gave permission for

Questions raised during the program covered a wide range of issues, such as when the people of Hong Kong would directly elect their chief executive, and whether China would surpass the US to become the world's largest economic power in 20 to 40 years.

the program to be filmed there surprised many in the media. Foreign media or production companies are permitted to produce programs in China in the areas of entertainment or sport, but programs addressing economic or financial issues, let alone politics and legislation, are considerably more sensitive.

Li described the staging of *Question Time* in China as a media event of considerable significance, and said that many regarded it as a positive move for the Chinese government in the way it deals with foreign media.

According to an article in the Shanghai-based magazine *Oriental Outlook* Monday, the program was filmed in front of a studio audience of some 180 people.

The invited panelists were Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Liu Jianchao, EU Commissioner Chris Patten, founder of Chinese fashion brand Shanghai Tang, David Tang, and secretary-general of the Boao Forum and goodwill ambassador to the UN Industrial Development Organization, Long Yongtu, as well as columnist Isabel Hilton.

Questions raised during the program covered a wide range of issues, such as when the people of Hong Kong would directly elect their chief executive, and whether China would surpass the US to become the world's largest economic power in 20 to 40 years. And questions on Taiwan were definitely among the most sensitive.

Foreign affairs spokesman Liu Jianchao told local media after the show that he was satisfied with his responses to questions from the audience and host, David Dimbleby. He said although debating issues with a panel of English speakers was quite a challenge, the program provided an opportunity for China to present its opinions to western audiences.

The range of different opinions people had about

the program can be seen from many website forums and blogs. Some people said they admired Long Yongtu for his hard-work to get China into the WTO and his responses to questions in the debate, while others said David Tang made some good points.

Although *Question Time* is little known in China, it has an average audience of four to five million in England, Li Wen from BBC World Service to *Beijing Today*. Li pointed out that *Question Time* focuses more on domestic topics in England, and that another BBC program, *Talking Point*, with a wider influence on overseas listeners, was produced in Beijing's Tsinghua University last Saturday.

The BBC has yet to publish the viewer ratings for *Question Time* last week, or any audience feedback on the China Week special, Li said, but he added that he believed the ratings would be higher than average, because of all the promotion

for the program in the preceding week, and because "China is such a popular topic in the UK."

Li Xiguang, director of the Center for International Communication Studies at Tsinghua University, pointed out that the program benefits the BBC's exploration of the market in China. While facing the competition with other international media like CNN, such a political debating program filmed in China can prove its ability to make any kind of program anywhere in the world.

Meanwhile the China Week special can give the western media a first hand look at the way real change is occurring in China. As Zhan Jiang, director of the journalism and communication department of China Youth University for Political Science said, "Since globalization is the trend of the future, a go-ahead from the Chinese government to the foreign media can have a very positive effect on China's image."



The Shanghai panel for BBC's Question Time: From left, proprietor of famed boutique Shanghai Tang, David Tang; Secretary General of the BOAO Forum, Long Yongtu; Former Hong Kong governor and EU External Affairs Chief, Chris Patten; program host David Dimbleby; Chinese foreign ministry spokesman, Liu Jianchao; and television columnist Isabel Hilton.

AFP Photo

## China a Positive Influence to the World

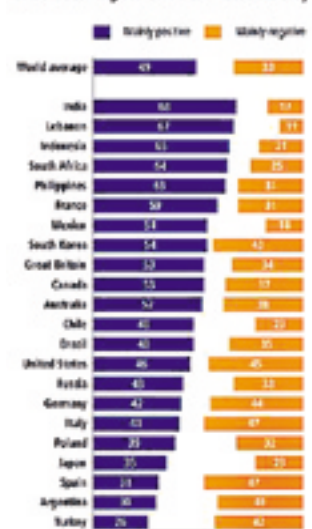
By Annie Wei

Some people say that politics and international conflicts can be likened to kids who are in the same class at school. They play together, they fight and they compete with each other.

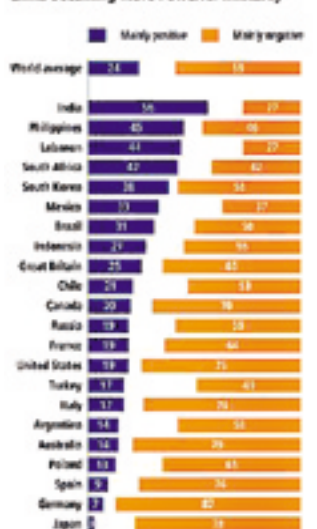
To see just how China is perceived in other parts of the world, international polling firm GlobeScan, conducted a poll, sampling 22,953 people in 22 countries from November 15, 2004 to January 5, 2005.

The results of the 22-na-

China Becoming More Powerful Economically



China Becoming More Powerful Militarily



The GlobeScan survey results



"Father of the Euro" and Nobel Prize winner Robert Mundell receives his Beijing permanent residence permit, Wednesday in Beijing (see Nobel Prize Winner Granted Green Card on page 5).

Photo by Cheng Yuyang

## PBC Raises Interest Rates on Housing Loans

By Nie Zhiyang

The People's Bank of China (PBC) announced a new regulation Wednesday on commercial bank's personal housing credit business.

The regulation contains two key amendments. As of yesterday, the preferential personal housing loan interest rate has been discontinued. A bottom line will be set for the interest rate, and the spectrum of

the bottom line will not be less than 0.9 times the benchmark rate of the temporary loan rate.

Meanwhile, the minimum proportion of the first repayment on a personal housing loan has been raised from the current 20 percent to 30 percent in cities and regions with rapidly rising real estate prices.

The exact proportion can be decided by the commer-

cial banks, in accordance with the specific regional increase of the real estate price, published by relevant state departments.

The PBC also determined Wednesday to reduce the excess bank reserve interest rate for financial institution from 1.62 to 0.99 percent per annum. The legal bank reserve interest rate remains at 1.89 percent.

who compete directly with China showed positive views about China's increasing economic growth, like the Philippines (70 percent), Indonesia (68 percent) and India (66 percent).

Analysts said the development of China did not affect foreign investment in other South-Asia countries, but actually enhanced it. For example, China contributes a lot to Malaysia's economy, such as in terms of tourism. Similarly, economic benefits explain the overall positive view from Australia.

Even in South American countries, such as Mexico, whose manufacturing sectors compete directly with China, there was an overall positive view (54 percent) on China's growing economic power.

The poll triggered many discussions on websites and blogs. On the Asia Times Online Community, some people said cooperation between China and India can benefit both countries, which have historically been viewed as rivals.

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# Liu Qi Pictures 2008 Beijing Olympics

By Chu Meng

"It is hoped the torch relay for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games will cover all parts of China, including Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. Planning of the route will begin in the latter half of this year," BOCOG president Liu Qi said in an interview broadcast by CCTV Sunday.

The organizing committee has not yet reached agreements with the Olympic committees of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, and the route is not expected to be finalized until early 2008. The torch relay, leading up to the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics, is expected

to last for three months. Liu, who is also secretary of the municipal party committee also expressed his wish to conduct the relay internationally, saying, "We want to take the Olympic spirit to various countries including developed and developing ones."

Meanwhile, he promised that some cheap tickets would be available for visitors, in order to encourage more people to watch the events on site in Beijing.

Liu also pledged that all Olympic venues would be completed by the end of 2007. "Various systems we have in place will guarantee it,"

he said, "New technology is being adopted at some venues such as the Water Cube, or National Swimming Center. We will not relax until the venues are actually in use." As for the National Stadium, which requires a large quantity of steel, Liu expressed the belief that all of it will be supplied by domestic enterprises, not surprising given that China is now the world's top steel producer.

Noting that the opening ceremony is crucial for the success of the Olympic Games, Liu said BOCOG would give it top priority in its preparations for the Games. He

said the opening ceremony should, above all, have Chinese characteristics and exhibit China's long history and unique culture. Liu said the opening ceremony should also adopt the latest technology and create a totally refreshing impression beyond people's expectations.

Liu added, "Beijing has promised to stage a high-level Olympic Games with Chinese characteristics in 2008. The closing of the Athens Olympics ushered in a new phase of Beijing's preparations for the 2008 Games. From now on we need to work even harder to make the Games a success."

## Two IPTV Licenses to be Issued

By Chu Meng

The State Administration of Radio Film and Television (SARFT) will release two IPTV (Internet protocol television) operating licenses in the second half of March, *National Business Daily* reported Tuesday.

China Central Television (CCTV) subsidiary iCCTV and Shanghai Media Group (SMG) subsidiary Oriental Net Television are the likely recipients of the licenses, according to media commentators. Telecom operators are excluded from the first group of candidates.

Yang Peihong, vice-director of SARFT's network administration department said in the report, "(The granting of such licenses) is still a sensitive problem in China." Currently, traditional telecom operators such as China Telecom, China Netcom, China Mobile, and China Unicom, are not allowed to operate radio and TV services. However radio and TV network operators are permitted to run telecom services. This policy barrier prevents telecom carriers from operating IPTV services independently.

A China Telecom official told Interfax this February, "Actually, telecom operators are ready for two alternatives. First, if SARFT grants IPTV licenses to traditional radio and TV stations only, we will have to cooperate with them by offering Internet services. But if telecom operators also receives licenses, we will be able to offer our own IPTV services."

However, although SARFT has not announced a clear timetable for IPTV, many telecom operators are currently testing IPTV services. "I believe once the licenses are issued, many players will rush into the market. Moreover, the IPTV industry will experience rapid growth in 2006 and 2007," the official said.

Deputy chief engineer of SARFT, Du Baichuan, said during the International Forum on Digital TV and Wireless Multimedia Communication held in Shanghai last November, "There is nothing wrong for telecom carriers to test IPTV, so long as they don't operate it commercially. Right now, telecom services can only be offered by telecom operators, but this does not mean that this rule will not be changed in the future. The policy gap will be bridged sooner or later."

IPTV refers to TV broadcasting services based on Internet protocol. Subscribers to the services can watch TV on their computer screen or on a TV set connected to a digital set-top box. IPTV offers both live streaming services and video on demand (VOD) services over the Internet.

IPTV based services are widely considered as the next emerging market over the next few years. The addition of television services will allow telecom companies to target a second wave of broadband subscribers bundling new services.



The second runway at Shanghai's Pudong International Airport was put into operation yesterday. The airport is the first on China's mainland to boast two main runways.

Photo by Yang Lei

## Three Countries Sign Oil Survey Research Deal

By Wang Shuang

State owned oil firms in China, the Philippines and Vietnam signed an agreement in Manila Monday on a three-year joint marine study in the South China Sea. Under the agreement, the three sides made a commitment to practice "peace, stability, cooperation and development" in the region.

This is the first time for the three parties to reach common understanding on cooperating and developing resources of the South China Sea together, and is widely seen as a historic and

substantive step towards cooperative development.

According to the terms of the agreement, which was signed by Philippine National Oil, China National Offshore Oil and Vietnam Oil and Gas the three parties will jointly carry out a maritime geology study and investigation on an area of 143,000 square kilometers over a three year period. The main goal is to determine the geological structure of the sea bed, the location of any oil and gas reserves, and confirm whether or not it is economically viable to

exploit such reserves.

"By signing this agreement, the three parties express their desire to engage in a joint research of petroleum resource potential in the agreement area as a pre-exploration activity," the three sides declared in a statement.

An energy expert who attended the ceremony says oil exploration is a high risk trade requiring enormous investment and that no one can guarantee final success. He also said that the political implications of the agreement were more significant than the economic ones.

The partners hope the plan will provide a model for oil development in the area, which has stalled, despite high prices and booming demand, because so many different nations claim rights to drill there.

## Proposal Released on Personal Credit Database

By Nie Zhiyang

The People's Bank of China issued an announcement Tuesday released soliciting public opinion on proposed regulations for a personal credit record database. The proposed database would keep records of all citizens' credit information.

The information recorded

would consist of three parts: basic information such as identity card number, occupation and residential address; a detailed picture of the individual's personal credit history; other information pertaining to personal credit levels.

Financial institutions would be obliged to provide customers' per-

sonal credit reports to the database promptly and accurately. While information kept in the database will be shared by various banking units, access to individuals' records would need to be authorized in writing by the person, except when the bank had identified a non-functional loan.

Individuals would also have the right to request a copy of their credit report from their bank, and have recourse to dispute inaccurate information with the credit bureau.

## Number of Central Enterprises to be Reduced

By Nie Zhiyang

While participating in the Third Session of the 10th National People's Congress, Liu Jie, general manger of Anshan Iron and Steel Group Corporation, last Saturday confirmed that his company would merge with Benxi Iron and Steel Group Corporation,

The move represents a fresh effort by the central government to strengthen state owned enterprises through mergers.

According to the guidelines of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Com-

mission (SASAC), only 80 to 100 corporations directly under the central government will be retained. These corporations mainly concentrate on sections with strategic significance to the national economy and national security, like resources, energy, metallurgy, automobiles and heavy machinery.

"To achieve this goals, we will sell, merge or release as appropriate. The ability to coordinate the state-run economy has been improved. Thus the portion of state-run share holding should be reduced, especially in solely state-

owned company, the majority of which can be turned into shareholding companies. It is unnecessary to insist on the 51 percent of the whole stock. The reduction of the proportion of the state-run holdings will not substantially impact the state-run economy's dominant position," said Li Rongrong, director of SASAC.

He also pointed out that two years will be granted to the corporations to develop freely, to become one of the top three in their own sectors. If such targets are not reached within this time, they will be restructured.

## Tariffs Hike for Imported Auto Parts

By Qiu Jiaoning

A new regulation to take effect from April 1 will raise tariffs on some auto parts, according to a joint announcement by the General Administration of Customs, the National Development and Reform Commission, and the finance and commerce ministries.

Under the regulation, importing all of a vehicle's parts would incur the tariff imposed on assembled vehicles but not the lower one that applies to parts. Importing a combination of major assemblies such as the chassis and engine or importing 60 percent of a vehicle's parts in value would also attract the higher tariff. Importing

a vehicle attracts an average tariff of 30 percent while the tariff on parts is 15 percent.

The regulation will prevent domestic companies from acting simply as assembly plants and stimulate technical development of domestic auto and auto parts industry. It will have an impact on all auto joint ventures and may cause a lag in the scheduled import of some new car models.

In 2004, China imported 177,000 motor vehicles, a year-on-year surge of 2.6 percent, with cars accounting for about two-thirds. Under WTO commitments, the country should cut tariffs on imported vehicles to 25 percent by July 2006.

## Restrictions Relaxed on Foreign Travel Agencies

By Qiu Jiaoning

The China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and Ministry of Commerce have jointly issued revised regulations on foreign controlled or fully foreign-funded travel agencies operating in China. The move further opens up China's tourism market to foreign investment, the Shanghai-based *Oriental Morning Post* reported Monday.

According to the revision, the registered capital floor for such agencies is reduced from 4 million to 2.5 million yuan. Previously, foreign investors were only allowed to open foreign controlled or fully foreign-funded travel agencies in five major cities - Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Xi'an, and at government designated resort areas. This

regional restriction has been canceled.

The previous regulation, issued on June 12, 2003, allowed foreign travel agencies to operate in China for the first time. On December 1, 2003, Jalpak International China, the first fully foreign-funded travel agency, and TUI China Travel Co, the first foreign controlled tourism joint venture, were established. There are currently five foreign controlled and five fully foreign-funded travel agencies operating in China.

In line with China's WTO commitments, regional restrictions on foreign travel agencies must be lifted by the end of 2007. China's lifting of the ban on foreign travel service providers comes more than two years ahead of schedule.

## Audit Results to be Released

By Lin Chenxi

Reports of an \$11 billion deficit uncovered in an audit of foreign loan and aid funding programs by the China National Audit Office (CNAO) are incorrect, according to the office's deputy chief auditor, Linghu An.

Linghu, who is also a CPPCC member, made the announcement at a press conference last Friday, stating, "By 2008, the National Audit

Office will have made the results of the audit public."

He explained that reports of the deficit were inaccurate, since data was still being collected at present and so there was no final result as yet.

Besides the task of auditing and notarizing foreign loan and aid fund programs, CNAO will also audit the execution of foreign aid funds for the first time this year.

## Wenzhou to Build Petrochemical Base

By Lin Chenxi

A business and investment conference held in Dongtou County, Wenzhou, last Friday listed the county's top 10 projects, which include the establishment of a petrochemical base.

The base will cover an area of almost 10 square kilometers with an estimated total investment of almost 30 billion RMB. Sales revenue is expected to exceed 35 billion yuan, making the base one of the mainstays of Wenzhou's economy.

According to this program, prior to 2008, a transitional zone will be established in Xiaomen,

Dongtou, with 21 investment projects and an investment volume 8.65 billion yuan, creating an industry zone with a sales revenue of more than 10 billion yuan. This will be characterized not only by providing both raw and processed material but also by its petrochemical technology and human resources, creating a hotspot for foreign investment.

By 2015, 10 petrochemical projects will be established in Damen, Dongtou, led by an ethane production project with an investment volume of 21.3 billion yuan and a sales revenue of 24 billion yuan.

## Planning Underway for Pan-Asia Railway

By Deng Minjie

A feasibility study for a railway between Kunming and Mengzi section, is 147 kilometers in length and will link with Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, Bangkok in Thailand, Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia and finally Singapore.

"Generally speaking, there are three stages to building a new railway, namely determining the course, authorization and approval by the National Development and Reform Committee, and construction. The Kunming-Mengzi section is in the first stage, and we look forward to the project being put into practice in the near future," a spokesperson from the ministry said.

The construction of the Pan-Asia Railway is part of the ministry's medium-long term program. The China section of the line consists of the east line, the west line and the central line.



# China Construction Bank Chairman Resigns



Zhang Enzhao  
Xinhua Photo

**T**he resignation of China Construction Bank (CCB) Chairman Zhang Enzhao for personal reasons was announced at the bank's board meeting on Wednesday. Sitting bank President Chang Zhenming was named temporary chairman in Zhang's place.

The exact reasons for Zhang's dismissal remain unclear, but according to the *Beijing Morning Post*, Zhao is currently under investigation for possible involvement in a corruption scandal and his activities have been limited as he is under surveillance.

Zhang's predecessor, Wang Xuebing, was dismissed and jailed for corruption in 2002.

Analysts have pointed out that the events could work against Construction Bank's efforts to sell a strategic stake to a foreign investor before holding its initial public offering in Hong Kong later this year.

Others, however, have said that Zhang's resignation was a sign of the sincerity of China's drive to clean up its state-owned banks before they enter the market. The appointment of an appropriately reputed person to the chairman position could minimize negative influence from

Zhang's resignation, some analysts said.

Ratings agency Standard & Poor's said in a statement that its BBB-/Stable/A-3 rating on the bank would not be immediately affected by the resignation. The agency also said Construction Bank had not clarified whether the matter was related to internal corruption, but added in its statement that even if that proved true, it should not have great influence on the bank's financial situation.

Construction Bank, China's top property lender, has been at the forefront of China's efforts to reform its debt-ridden banking sector since

receiving \$22.5 billion in late 2003 to recapitalize its balance sheet following aggressive bad loan write-downs.

Zhang Enzhao, as the bank's leader at the time, was named one of China's top economic figures by China Central Television in 2004. Some experts said at the time that the bank had succeeded in rearranging its assets and managed to reach international standards for market listing under Zhang's leadership.

Construction Bank had previously announced plans to enter the global capital market this year, aiming to raise \$5 billion to \$10 billion from its Hong Kong listing.

## Greenpeace Accuses Food Firms of Hiding GM Ingredients

By Chu Meng

Kraft's Ritz cracker and Cambell's corn soup products sold in the China market contain ingredients made from genetically modified soybeans but fail to inform consumers of that on their labels, Greenpeace China charged on March 15.

GeneScan, a Germany-based independent laboratory, found the GM ingredients during tests of 28 selected sample foods sold in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou that began last December, Ma Tianjie from Greenpeace China's office told *Beijing Today* Tuesday.

"We have received a copy of the testing report from Greenpeace and have begun to study it to check its reliability," Li Lingping from Kraft's public affairs office told *Beijing Today* the day after Greenpeace leveled its charges. The company has yet to give a clear-cut response to the matter.

Several major supermarkets in Beijing have taken Ritz crackers off their shelves, while local Carrefour stores have said they will await authoritative results before taking any action.

*China Daily* reported Tuesday that Campbell Soup Asia Co. had explained its golden corn soup was manufactured in North America, where almost 70 percent of all soybeans were genetically modified.

"Highly refined soy protein is used as a flavor enhancer in the soup. That means it is a minor constituent, so if the soup does contain genetically modified material, this would be at an extremely low level," the report said.

Greenpeace also accused the two brands of using "double-standards" in their GM food policies, because Kraft and Campbell's Soup had committed not to use GM ingredients in Europe, but had not done so in China.

"We are demanding these companies not sell GM foods in China, as consumers deserve the same rights and safety standards everywhere," Ma said. "They should strictly accord with label regulations in China and pay full respect to consumers' rights. The overwhelming majority of Chinese consumers do not want genetic engineering in their rice bowls."

To ensure food security for its 1.3 billion people, the Chinese government has spent heavily on agricultural biotechnology research since the 1980s. China's plan appears to have two sides: pushing forward on GM foods that offer high yield and disease resistance, while promoting GM-free areas for crops to sell to rich export markets, where many consumers still reject the idea of genetically modified food.



## China-made Buses Bound for European, American Markets Soon

Domestically-made buses were on show at a Shanghai exhibition Tuesday. China produced 80,000 buses in 2004, almost three times Europe's total of 24,000. China-made buses are expected to enter European and American markets within two years.

Xinhua Photo

## China Launches Foreign Currency Pairs Trade

By Chu Meng

The Bank of China and the China Foreign Exchange Trade System (CFETS), the country's inter-bank foreign exchange market, signed a deal on Tuesday to allow market participants in China to be able to begin trading foreign currency pairs for the first time in May. The agreement was part of China's overall foreign exchange reforms, Li Yu, vice director general of CFETS said in a statement the same day.

The eight foreign currencies covered under the new pairing process are the Euro, US dollar, Hong Kong dollar, Australian dollar, Canadian dollar, British pound, Swiss franc (CHF) and

Japanese yen.

They would be paired as EUR/USD, AUD/USD, GBP/USD, USD/JPY, USD/CAD, USD/CHF, USD/HKD and EUR/JPY, the *China Securities Journal* reported on Tuesday.

Seven foreign banks, including Deutsche Bank, Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp and ABN Amro Bank, as well as two domestic banks, Bank of China and CITIC Industrial Bank, will be among the first batch of market makers for the new currency pairs.

"The new products will offer domestic banks more competitive abilities on price and better satisfy local banks' for-

eign exchange investment and hedging needs, raising the effectiveness of foreign exchange use domestically and easing appreciation pressure on the yuan," Li said.

The introduction of foreign currency trading pairs is aimed at bringing market-maker mechanisms into the local market and can act as a trial platform for yuan trading products. Being a market maker means a bank stands ready to step in and participate in a transaction when no other buyer or seller can be found.

"Adjustments or additions will be made in the future according to market reaction," Li said.

## China Unicom Wins Bidding for Macao CDMA License

By Chu Meng

China Unicom has won the opening bid for a CDMA license in the Macao Special Administrative Region, the first time a mainland telecommunication carrier has obtained such a mobile service license outside the mainland, the Macao government announced last Friday.

"China Unicom is planning to invest a total of 250 million yuan in the construction of its first CDMA network outside of the Chinese mainland. The first 170 million yuan worth of network construction is expected to be completed in six to eight months' time before entering trial operation, in order to ensure roaming services can be offered during the East Asian Games in October," Zhao Le,

vice president and executive director of China Unicom said at the announcement.

Zhao added the company's objective in its first year in Macao would be to provide convenient, high quality roaming services to CDMA subscribers and establish roaming agreements with major CDMA operators around the world.

"This is an important step forward for China Unicom, the only CDMA operator in mainland China, in its overseas expansion strategy," he said.

China Unicom (Macao), registered in Macao and invested in by China Unicom and its wholly-owned subsidiary China Unicom International, will be responsible for the implementation and operation of the project.

## Carlyle Group to Open Local Office

By Deng Minjie

US-based Carlyle Group is moving forward with plans to open a Beijing office to expand its ability to tap into investment opportunities in the pan-Asian region. The office is expected to open for business in May, *China Business News* reported on March 11.

Carlyle Group, a global private equity firm, announced the reorganization and significant expansion of its pan-Asian investment activities earlier this month. The company opened an office in Shanghai in 2004.

"There is tremendous opportunity in Asia and we will stay at the vanguard of exploring and capturing this potential. China is our priority in regional development. We view the Pearl

Delta, Yangtze Delta as well as the Bohai Sea circle as the key business areas in China," Zu Wencui, managing director of Carlyle Group and head of Carlyle Asia Capital Group, said.

"Regarding the strategic position of Beijing, we have two main considerations. On the one hand, it's a center of IT, banking, and mass media; on the other hand, many companies from many kinds of fields choose Beijing as their base of decision-making because it is convenient for them to communicate with related government departments," Zu added.

The establishment of a Beijing office should support Carlyle Group (China)'s pursuit of private interests in IT investments and the public service sector.

## Merchant Bank Rated Most Competitive

By Chu Meng

China Merchants Bank came out on top in a list ranking the competitiveness of 14 domestic commercial banks published last Sunday by the Chinese magazine *Banker* in conjunction with the Research Center for China Banking Competitiveness.

China Minsheng Banking Corp and Shanghai Pudong Development Bank came in second and third in the rankings, which assessed the competitiveness of China's four state-owned banks and 10 joint-stock commercial banks.

Fourth and fifth places went to China Construction Bank and the Bank of China, two state-owned lenders that had clearly improved their comprehensive competitiveness since starting joint stock reform in late 2003, the report said. Because of the improved quality of its assets and higher efficiency of its internal control system, Construction Bank was ranked highest among China's Big Four state-owned banks. China's largest state-owned commercial bank, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), was ranked tops in terms of market influence.

## Booming Phoenix Planning JV in China

By Deng Minjie

Hong Kong-based Phoenix Satellite Television Holdings announced it earned profits of over HK\$150 million for the 2004 financial year in its latest fiscal report, published in *Beijing Morning Post* on Monday.

The group's total revenues rose nearly 57 percent from 2003 to exceed HK\$1 billion for the first time in company history. The operator of several popular cable channels is planning to improve on those results by setting up a joint venture programming production company in the Chinese mainland, according to its report.

"We expect to have more opportunities to cooperate with some local leading media companies and share our experience with them. We hope to use these co-operative efforts to become a leading content provider capable of offer a range of services to the public in near future," Liang Yunbo, director of strategic planning at Phoenix Group told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday.

"We may collaborate with some excellent service providers and telecom operators, such as China Mobile and China Unicom, as well as some print media firms. We also look forward to having chances to meet potential partners from other fields," Liang added.

## Nanjing Panda Forced to Pay Debts

By Nie Zhiyang

The government of Jiangsu Province has agreed to take responsibility for 500 million yuan owed by Panda Mobile, a subsidiary of Shanghai and Hong Kong-listed mobile phone maker Nanjing Panda Electronics Co., the company announced on Monday.

The transfer means that Panda Mobile will be split off from Nanjing Panda and withdrawn from the handset market.

The company also said the Xuanwu District Court in Nanjing had ordered two of its assets to be used to pay down its heavy debts. Nanjing Panda surrendered its 51 percent stake in Nanjing Panda Mobile Co. and 95 percent holding in Nanjing Panda Communication Development Co., worth a total of 120 million yuan, to repay principal and interest totaling around the same amount from loans owed to Nanjing Weite Investment Co.

Trading of Nanjing Panda shares was suspended last Friday on the Hong Kong exchange.

## China Tietong Telecom Seeks Funds

By Qiu Jiaoning

China Tietong Telecommunications Corp (Tietong) is currently talking with Cisco Systems Inc., Nortel Networks Corp, Deutsche Telekom AG and Guangdong Eastern Fibernet Investment about arranging capital injections that could help it catch up with China's four main telecom giants, *China Business News* reported on Tuesday.

"Tietong is going to issue corporate bonds by the end of 2005 and plans to list part of the company's best assets within the next two or three years. The scale of capital circulation for the corporate bonds will be 1 billion yuan," Tietong Chairman Zhao Jibin told reporters last week on the sidelines of the National People's Congress.

The company had signed up five million new fixed-line subscribers last year, accounting for 10 percent of the industry's total, Zhao said, adding his firm had set a profit goal of 167 million yuan this year.

## Kuoni Opens Rep Office in Beijing

By James Liu

Reto Wilhelm, Kuoni Group vice executive president and Rolf Schafroth, CEO of Kuoni Incoming Europe, announced the opening of Kuoni Group's new representative office in Beijing at a news conference on Tuesday afternoon. The office underlined the key strategic importance that Kuoni Group, a Switzerland-based giant in the tourism field, attached to the Chinese market, they said.

The representative office, currently running in CITIC Building on Jianwai Avenue, would mainly "act as a coordinating office between Beijing and Kuoni's headquarters and help the group to map out investment decisions," Sharon Wu, coordinator of Kuoni's Beijing office, told *Beijing Today*.



# Stage Set for New Sino-India Ties

New Delhi, March 13 (India Times) – The Chinese premier Wen Jiabao will be in India from April 9-12. The visit, which would have taken place in March, was pushed back because of the Chinese leader's packed schedule. The two governments will announce the dates simultaneously.

The government is setting great store by the visit and a slew of agreements are expected to be signed. Chinese foreign ministry officials have been camping here over the past week to finalize these agreements. The visit will get prime billing in several other world capitals – Washington, Tokyo, Islamabad are just the top three.

But there are other, big-ticket issues on the political end of the table that will find utterance. The boundary dispute is on top of the list. The newly appointed special envoy for China, M K Narayanan, will have his first meeting

with his counterpart Dai Bingguo before the visit.

The two sides are expected to finalize a set of political principles that will govern the parameters of the dispute settlement. India and China have recently decided to go in for joint bidding in international energy projects, particularly in third countries. The energy ministers will appoint a joint task force to work out the details and if there is a convergence, an agreement could well be in the offing.

**Analyst's Take:**

*With the development of relations between India and China, bilateral trade is heating up. In 2004, the value of China's exports to India reached \$5.93 billion, a year-on-year surge of 77.2 percent, and that of China's imports from India hit \$7.68 billion, a year-on-year surge of 80.5 percent.*

*Sino-India trade volume rocketed up from \$7.6 billion in 2003 to \$13.6 billion in 2004. And even the record-high figure of \$13.6 billion in bilateral trade is just one percent of China's total foreign trade volume. In short, there are great potentialities in Sino-India commercial relations. By the end of 2010, the annual bilateral trade volume is expected to reach \$30 billion.*

*The economies of the two countries are complementary to one another in nature. China mainly imports iron ore and steel products from India and exports raw silk, textile materials, mechanical and electrical products to India.*

*More and more Chinese companies are inclined to make or increase investment in India, which is further liberalizing relevant policies. As India is trying to relax some restrictions on infrastructure projects, it is a good*

*chance for Chinese companies to make investments.*

*The Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar, has paid great attention to the two countries' cooperation in energy fields. On the one hand, India and China may enter into cooperation to develop energy resources in a third country. On the other hand, the two sides may make joint efforts to ensure the security of offshore oil channels. Cooperating rather than competing in energy will make India and China a formidable power bloc. However, it will take a long road to find a reliable cooperation mode which will enable the two sides to work in perfect harmony.*

**– Ma Jiali, research professor of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations**

(Qiu Jiaoning)

## Gates: Microsoft Ready to Buy

March 13 (Bloomberg News) –Microsoft Corp. Chairman Bill Gates is in a buying mood. The founder of the world's largest software company said he is pushing his most senior managers to help find the right take-over candidates.

“We are really looking hard,” Gates said recently in San Diego. He said Redmond, Wash.-based Microsoft is taking a “bottom-up” approach to acquisitions by asking managers to look for targets.

Gates' mandate came as Microsoft bought Groove Networks Inc. last week for an undisclosed amount. Beverly,

Mass.-based Groove is a privately owned company founded by Lotus Notes creator Ray Ozzie.

Gates said his company probably will look at buying “a couple of things” in the next few years to boost the business that sells accounting and human resources software.

Microsoft wants to increase revenue from those programs as sales growth slows.

Microsoft, which never spent more than \$1.5 billion on a deal and has paid less than \$1 billion for all but three, would consider making a large acquisition, Gates said.

## Swiss Air Seeks OK for Lufthansa Deal

Frankfurt, March 14 (Reuters) – Swiss International Air Lines' shareholders met on Monday amid signs the unprofitable carrier's second attempt at a tie-up with Lufthansa would soon lead to a takeover by its German neighbor.

The two airlines, long mooted as potential partners, confirmed on Sunday they were in talks over a deal, in which Lufthansa would buy out the 14 percent of Swiss shares in free float if the airline's larger shareholders agreed.

Swiss' major shareholders met on Monday at a secret location to discuss the terms of the deal with the airline, which has yet to make a profit since it was created with a public-private cash injection in early 2002.

Swiss banks UBS and

Credit Suisse, the Swiss government and the local Zurich authority together hold around 50 percent of Swiss's shares, while an array of corporations hold the remaining 36 percent.

“We will look at (the conditions), form an opinion and inform Swiss,” a UBS spokeswoman said.

Shareholders say they want a deal that best meets Switzerland's needs as a key location for big business, adding that it is important to maintain both the brand “Swiss” and the various airports in Zurich, Basel and Geneva.

“The most important thing for the government is that Switzerland remains fully connected to international air traffic. Also important are the jobs,” said Elisabeth Meyerhans, a government spokeswoman.

## OPEC OKs 500K Barrel Boost

Isfahan, March 16 (AP) – Looking ahead to strong demand next winter, OPEC ministers on Wednesday agreed to immediately start pumping an extra half-million barrels of oil a day and held out prospects of a similar boost later if needed.

The move reflected OPEC concerns about the next cold season. Trying to ease worries, OPEC's president, Kuwaiti Oil Minister Sheik Ahmed Fahd Al Ahmed Al Sabah, told reporters that at full capacity - and including Iraq, which is exempt from OPEC quotas while rebuild-

ing – the oil-producer group could pump some 31 million barrels a day.

That would represent a daily increase of about 1.5 million barrels from present levels. Markets seemed unimpressed. Shortly after the decision was reached, light crude was trading at \$54.60 on the New York Mercantile Exchange – down 45 cents from Tuesday's close but up 20 cents from intraday lows.

The decision to boost output beginning April 1 will officially raise the group's ceiling to an all-time high of 27.5 million barrels a day.

## Carrefour to Exit Japan

Tokyo, March 10 (Reuters) – French retailer Carrefour will exit Japan after just four years, selling its eight stores to top Asian retailer Aeon Co., reportedly for about \$100 million, the two firms said on Thursday.

The pullout is evidence of the difficulty that bulk-selling foreign entrants such as rival Wal-Mart Stores Inc. have had in cracking Japan, where famously fickle consumers buy whatever they need in small amounts every few days.

Carrefour, the world's second-biggest retailer, has also struggled to overcome weakness in consumer spending since it entered the Japanese market in 2000.

“Having only eight stores did not produce enough merits,” Philippe Jarry, CEO of Carrefour Asia, told a news conference.

“We ultimately reached the decision that we need a Japanese partner to stay in the market for a long time.”

The sector still faces flagging sales, with overall supermarket store sales in Japan down 3.5 percent last year and a 0.7 percent fall in same-store sales at convenience store chains, industry data shows.

The sale to Aeon – to be completed on Thursday – would fit in with Carrefour's stated intention to rid itself of assets worth 1 billion euros (\$1.34 billion) by late 2005.

Carrefour, weighed down by net debt of 6.79 billion euros and struggling to push up languishing hypermarket sales at home and in Europe, also said it had sold its assets in Mexico to Chedraui. The asset sale was announced along with its slightly weaker-than-anticipated 2004 earnings.

**Local Report:**  
In Japan, Carrefour mechan-

*ically applied its experience in European and American markets without adjusting the management principles and tactics according to the different business culture and consumer behavior.*

*Carrefour's first store in Japan was located near the International Exhibition Center where there are almost no residents. When commencing business, many consumers drove to the big store for shopping but the novelty soon wore off. Depending on high volume to compensate for very narrow profit margins on merchandise, Carrefour had some advantage in price. However, it was not enough.*

*European and American consumers are used to purchasing lots of food and daily necessities for home storage over the weekend while Japanese ones are much different. Most Japanese women will give up their jobs to manage their household once married, so they have time to go shopping for fresh goods in stores nearby whenever they need. Stores and markets are usually set up in residential districts or downtown areas in Japan. But all of Carrefour's stores in Japan lie in the outer suburbs.*

*Carrefour is used to directly purchasing merchandise from manufacturer plants to reduce cost, but most Japanese products are commissioned by agency companies. Owing to the different business culture, only 55 percent of Carrefour's merchandise could be purchased from manufacturer plants, despite great efforts.*

*Companies cannot gain a firm footing in any market if they fail to grasp consumer habits and preference.*

**– Xinhua News Agency, March 12, 2005**

(Qiu Jiaoning)



Bernard Ebbers, former CEO of WorldCom, leaves the Manhattan federal court with wife Kristie on Tuesday.

## Former WorldCom CEO Guilty on All Counts

New York, March 16 (AP) – Bernard Ebbers, the once-swaggering CEO of WorldCom, was convicted Tuesday of engineering the largest corporate fraud in US history – an \$11 billion accounting scandal that capsize the big telecom company three years ago.

The verdict marked a colossal fall for Ebbers, who had turned a humble Mississippi long-distance provider into a global telecommunications power, swallowing up companies along the way and earning the nickname “Telecom Cowboy.”

A federal jury in Manhattan returned guilty verdicts on all nine counts, including securities fraud, conspiracy and lying to regulators – a decision that could send Ebbers, 63, to prison for the rest of his life. Sentencing was set for June 13.

The former chief executive reddened deeply when the jury announced its verdict after eight days of deliberations, and his wife, Kristie, burst into tears in the courtroom's front row. Later,

as his lawyer spoke outside, promising an appeal, Ebbers and his wife – nearly toppled by the enormous crew of cameras and reporters camped outside the federal courthouse – made their way to a nearby street, hailed a cab and drove away.

In a six-week trial, prosecutors painted Ebbers as obsessed with keeping WorldCom stock high, and panicked about pressure he was getting over \$400 million in personal loans that were backed by his own WorldCom shares.

From late 2000 to mid-2002, the government claimed, Ebbers intimidated chief financial officer Scott Sullivan into covering up billions of dollars in out-of-control expenses and recognizing improper revenue.

Ebbers himself took the witness stand at trial's end and flatly denied any role in the fraud. He said he viewed his role at the company as a visionary and cheerleader, was uncomfortable with accounting and left it to Sullivan.

## Vodafone Clinches \$3.5 Bln Romanian, Czech Deal

London, March 15 (Reuters) – Vodafone Group Plc is paying about \$3.5 billion in cash to take control of Romanian mobile phone group Mobifon and Czech wireless group Oskar Mobil, the UK-based mobile phone giant said on Tuesday.

Confirming a Reuters report, financially-powerful Vodafone said it had agreed to buy the last two key assets from Canadian-based holding company Telesystem International Wireless for around \$4.4 billion including debt.

Vodafone, the world's larg-

est mobile phone company by revenues, said last week it was in talks with TIW about buying the 79 percent it does not already own of Mobifon, a leading Romanian mobile group, and all of third-ranked Czech peer Oskar.

“These acquisitions will create value for our shareholders and will be good for our customers,” said Vodafone's Chief Executive Arun Sarin in a statement. “They are also consistent with our stated strategy of increasing investment in central and eastern Europe.”

## Disney Set for New Path

Los Angeles, March 14 (AP) – Robert Iger will inherit a prospering company when he takes over as Disney CEO from Michael Eisner – as well as a myriad of problems ranging from shareholder discontent to mending bridges burned by his mercurial predecessor and supporter.

Iger has spent much of his career as second-in-command, leading parts of large companies, but never the whole – but analysts aren't worried. Iger has worked at ABC or Disney for 30 years, and knows the company top to bottom, they say.

Iger formally takes over on October 1 from Eisner,

who will end his tenure after 21 years. Eisner will remain on the board until his term expires in early 2006.

Iger has spent the last year making it clear he will be a different leader than Eisner, a notorious micromanager.

“The heart and soul of the company is creativity and innovation,” Iger said at a January conference. “The most important thing for any CEO is to respect that.”

The first test of Iger's leadership may be negotiating a new deal with Pixar Animation Studios, the creator of such hits as the recent Oscar-winner “The Incredibles.”



# Local Foods Feared Tainted by Sudan Dyes

By Liu Zhaoxi

Hundreds of local people headed to Wangfujing on Tuesday, Consumer's Day, to get food products tested for carcinogenic Sudan dyes for free by staff from the China Institute of Food Safety.

Their concerns could be well justified, as three food safety issues involving Sudan emerged this week.

On Wednesday, KFC China announced through its official website that the seasoning used in two of its products were found to contain Sudan I.

"We have decided to stop selling New Orleans barbecue chicken wings and New Orleans baked chicken thigh sandwiches in all KFC restaurants around China starting March 16 and demolish all remaining materials at the same time," the statement said.

The company had already ordered new seasoning for its chicken wing products and supplies were expected to resume in around one



Hundreds of local people lined up to get food purchases tested for Sudan dye at Wangfujing on Tuesday.  
Photo by Wang Zhenlong

week, it said.

The same day, the Beijing government announced a ban on sales of all seasoning products made by Heinz-Meiweiyuan (Guangzhou) Food Co., as food safety tests have shown some products could contain

Sudan dye.

On Monday, local Carrefour stores pulled Tantanxiang-brand chili sauce products from their shelves for fear the sauce contained the feared colorant.

Over the weekend, domestic me-

dia reported that Tantanxiang spicy turnip pickle, sold at Carrefour stores in Shanghai, was confirmed to contain Sudan IV. The Beijing branches of the French supermarket chain did not stock that product, but did stock chili sauce from the same maker, a public relations official of Carrefour North China Office, who declined to be named, told *Beijing Today* on Monday.

Although the company did not receive removal notice from food safety authorities to halt sales of the sauce, it decided to remove the product until tests were conducted, he said.

Tantanxiang products are made by a company in Changsha, Hunan Province. A company executive, identified as Mr. Peng, was quoted by *Beijing Youth Daily* on Monday as confirming that there was a problem with the red dye used in the spicy turnip pickle. The company had issued a nationwide recall of the pickle, the only of its products proven to be tainted, Peng said.



Pat Adler and Isabel Crook, professors at Beijing Foreign Studies University, receive their permanent residence cards on Wednesday.

Photo by Tian Yufeng

## Nobel Prize Winner Granted Green Card

By Liu Zhaoxi

Twelve foreign experts in Beijing were granted permanent residence permits, or "green cards," on Wednesday. Among them was Canadian Robert Mundell, who won the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1999.

"This is a very memorable moment for me. It is an honor, plea-

sure and great opportunity for me to become a green card-holding resident of Beijing," Mundell said at the ceremony for the granting of the selective permits.

Mundell has visited China frequently and in August last year, he wrote a letter to the Beijing government requesting permanent res-

ident status in the city. He is an adviser and honorary professor at Tsinghua University and other domestic universities, the Shanghai-based *Oriental Morning Post* reported yesterday. The acclaimed economist told the newspaper that he loved Beijing for its dynamism and he wanted to be here for the

2008 Olympic Games.

Other foreigners given green cards included Chen Weiding, president of Intel China, and some foreign professors working for universities in Beijing. So far, permanent residence permits have been issued to more than 100 foreigners in the Chinese capital, the *Beijing News* reported.

## Three Angry Consumers Rage at Range Rover

By Wang Chun

Three Range Rover vehicles, draped in banners bearing angry slogans, were dragged into Chaoyang Park on Tuesday for Consumers' Rights Day. The SUVs had been carried to Beijing on a large truck from Shenyang, Liaoning Province the night before as part of a nationwide campaign by their owners to raise consumer awareness to possible defects with the expensive imported vehicles.

Mr. Zhao, owner of one of the Range Rovers, said Beijing was the second stop on a cross-country tour that would also include Shanghai, the location of the China headquarters of Range Rover owner Ford, Guangzhou and Hong Kong.

The owners contended that after racking up 50,000 kilometers, the SUVs all developed se-

rious technical problems with their transmissions. Since all three vehicles showed similar symptoms and had nearly identical mileage, it was likely a sign of a major design flaw, they said.

They hired lawyers to negotiate with Rover, the British carmaker that produces Range Rover vehicles, but those meetings yielded no result. They then decided to band together to take their case on the road as a way of protecting their rights and those of other consumers.

An unexpected fourth Range Rover turned up at the park on Tuesday, driven by Yang Youming, general manager and chairman of the Beijing Range Rover Club. Yang inspected the three SUVs and then said they had been smuggled into China and their owners tricked by unlicensed dealers. But the owners insisted they bought their Range Rovers through legitimate channels.

The Range Rover, a luxury 4x4 SUV introduced in 1970, has long been saddled by a poor reputation for quality and reliability, and the Land Rover mark came in second to last in a July 2003 report on reliability published by JD Power.



A show of Picasso woodcuts opening March 26 reflects the different styles the master used in different periods of his lengthy career.  
Photo by Cui Jun

## Picasso Coming to Capital

By Liu Zhaoxi

Over 260 original woodcuts by late legend Pablo Picasso arrived in Beijing on Tuesday afternoon in preparation for a major local show.

The valuable artworks were transported to Beijing after being displayed in Shanghai and Shenzhen. They will be arranged into eight series for the local exhibition in order to chart changes in Picasso's style throughout his life, according to *Beijing Youth Daily*. It is the first time for some of the works, done in the 1920s, to travel outside France and Italy.

All the works are on loan from

the Picasso Foundation in France, which in turn borrowed and rented them from private collectors in Europe expressly for the purpose of holding a show during the China-France Culture Year. Insurance coverage for the pieces to be displayed in Beijing is worth more than 100 million yuan.

The exhibition will open March 26 at the Tian'anmen Square Huangcheng Art Museum. The opening was delayed six days from its original date because the shows in Shenzhen and Shanghai proved big hits and were extended.

## New Face of Silk Street Set to Open

By Chu Meng

The new Xiushui Market, a modern five-story building that stands just next to the former grounds of the Silk Street clothes market, will open to the public tomorrow, after its debut had been postponed several times from its original date of early last month.

The imposing structure has been decked out mostly in carmine and navy blue to give it a strong traditional Chinese flavor.

"Silk, pearls and clothing are main commodities sold here. Most vendors have finished their preparation for the opening this week," Ji Wei, a member of the shopping center's management group, told 21CN.com on Monday.

"We will strictly fulfill our promise to offer top-quality products at reasonable prices and administration personnel have already begun inspections to weed out counterfeit or poor quality goods in the market," Ji added.

While there should be far fewer imitation brand name goods sold at Xiushui Market than there used to be at Silk Street, there was no way to completely keep knock-offs out of the market, he confessed. But Ji vowed to consumers that no fake or low quality goods would be sold.

All 1,500 stalls in the market have been rented out and many vendors are in line to secure a place in the new shopping center. After a series of adjustments, monthly rates for renting a stall have been set from 40,000 yuan for a coveted first floor position to just 4,000 yuan.



A volunteer is injected with the HIV vaccine.

## First Trials of AIDS Vaccine Off to Good Start

By Zhang Di

Eight people, four men and four women, in southern China have volunteered to be test subjects in the first clinical trials of an AIDS vaccine in this country.

The tests began at the Guangxi Center for Disease Control and Prevention on March 12, the *Beijing News* reported.

"The first phase trials are aimed at determining whether the vaccine has harmful effects on humans," Chen Jie, the director of the center, was quoted as saying.

Four of the volunteers were injected with the vaccine and four with a placebo. The first check-ups, conducted 24 hours after the drugs were administered, showed no signs of negative reactions.

"The progress is satisfactory," Chen said.

Researchers involved in the trials said the subjects' condition would be closely monitored for 180 days, while the first phase tests would run a total of 14 months.

A volunteer surnamed Chen, a local college student, said he felt no effects from his injection.

The start of trials does not mean that China is close to releasing a viable AIDS vaccine because international standards call for three phases of clinical trials before a vaccine can enter distribution.

"Only if third phase trials show concrete evidence that the vaccine is capable of preventing the contraction of HIV can this drug be called successful," Chen said.

The trials should take a total of five years, longer than those for drugs to treat other diseases because AIDS was very different than other diseases, he added.

Starting next week, the center will recruit another 41 volunteers to participate in the first phase trials.

While volunteers could not be assured the drug was safe, previous tests indicated there was little chance of harm, Chen said.

Before it was given to people, the vaccine was tested on monkeys over 100 times without a single incident of physical damage.

## Calling an End to Theft

By Zhang Di

The Xicheng District Police Department launched China's first 24-hour theft prevention hotline on Sunday morning, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported.

People who call in with information that leads to the cracking of specific cases of burglary or criminal organizations will receive rewards that start at 200 yuan and go up indefinitely.

The reward hotline was part of a broader campaign to tackle theft in Xicheng through raising public awareness and encouraging people to do their part, *Beijing Youth Daily* said.

Sources from the Xicheng police said they had busted 12 criminal gangs since last December in the course of handling 3,435 cases of theft involving 1.2 million yuan worth of stolen goods.

But that represented a fraction of thefts in the district, as about 70 percent of victims never report to the police, the sources said.

Previous theft prevention hotlines have proven effective in reducing crime around the country. The first was launched by the Public Transport Department of the Beijing police in 1998.

That hotline has aided police in cracking down on theft and given them a useful data base of information, allowing faster tracking and apprehension of bus-bound pickpockets.

The hotline number is 8399 5338.



# 10th NPC and CPPCC Close the Session

Commentary:

## China's Anti-Secession Law Embodies Fundamental Interest of the Chinese Nation

By Shida Zhu

China now has a powerful legal defence line against any secessionist efforts as the 2,896 deputies to the National People's Congress approved the new anti-secession law unanimously without any votes against at the third plenary session of the tenth NPC on March 14.

The law shows the uncompromising resolve of the Chinese people to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and to prevent and contain any effort to split Taiwan from China. The bright future of the peaceful reunification of the motherland and the fundamental interests of the compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Straits will be thus guaranteed.

China has always been firm over the principled issue of opposing any secessionist moves. The law symbolizes the consensus of the Chinese and reaffirms the internationally recognized fact of "the mainland and Taiwan belonging to one China", thus maintaining in a more powerful way the status quo in the relations of both sides and peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits.

The law has made clear-cut and solemn promises in promoting the healthy development of the relations between both sides on either side of the Taiwan Straits and the peaceful reunification of the motherland. It shows to the greatest extent the respect for the wishes of the compatriots on both sides of the Straits, the Taiwan compatriots in particular, for peace and stability and has given the greatest possible consideration to their vital interest and long-term well being.

The law unequivocally states that it encourages and promotes exchange between the two sides in personnel, economic and cultural endeavors and works to promote direct communications in business activities, postal service and air flights and negotiations and talks on an equal footing between both sides. This fully demonstrates the sincerity of the mainland for talks on any issues under the prerequisite of the principled stand of one China. The peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue and the realization of the peaceful reunification of the motherland are not only in accord with the fundamental interests of com-

patriots on both sides of the Taiwan Straits and the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation, but also in accord with the current world trend of peace and development. The state will try its utmost to attain these ends peacefully.

To safeguard state sovereignty and territorial integrity is the key interest of the Chinese nation. Any issue involving state sovereignty and territorial integrity has to be decided by the 1.3 billion Chinese people, including the 23 million Taiwanese compatriots. The 1.3 billion Chinese will never allow forces hoping to promote "Taiwan independence" to act wilfully. Non-peaceful means in stopping the split of the country and safeguarding state sovereignty and territorial integrity as stated in the law is targeted at such "Taiwan independence" forces; it is by no means aimed at the compatriots in Taiwan. The state will use all means to protect the life and property of the people in Taiwan and their other legitimate rights. In the meantime, it will protect the rights and interests of the Taiwan compatriots in other parts of China.

To the compatriots on both sides of the Straits, the law is undoubtedly a legal defence line, a line that protects their fundamental interests by the greatest possible means. The law that embodies the will of the 1.3 billion Chinese people will certainly win wide approval and support from the compatriots on both sides of the Straits. It will, too, exercise a deterrent power on the handful of "Taiwan independence" secessionists. It is natural for them to be afraid of it and fling mud at it.

However, the handful of "Taiwan independence" forces are in no position to represent the broad masses of the Taiwan compatriots. The future of the relations between both sides on either side of the Straits is in the hands of the 1.3 billion Chinese people. It is hoped that the Taiwan compatriots will understand the sincere will of the state to safeguard peace across the Taiwan Straits, improve relations and protect the interests of the people on either side of the Straits and that they will not be cheated and hoodwinked by the handful of "Taiwan independence" forces. Both sides will work towards peace and stability.

## Government Urged to Curb House Price Rises

By Jia Ting

Government departments at various levels should resort to their regulative power in curbing the rising housing prices from hiking further, said delegates attending the sessions of the top advisory body and legislature.

According to the National Statistics Bureau (NSB), China's average commercial housing price stood at 2,777 yuan per square meter in the first nine months of 2004, a rise of 13 percent year-on-year.

The figure continued rising steadily in 35 major Chinese cities in the fourth quarter last year, or up 10.8 percent on a yearly basis.

"Developers have reaped exceedingly high profits in the current chaotic real estate market," said Zheng Gongcheng, a deputy to the NPC and vice dean of the Labor Relations and Human Resources School under Renmin University of China.

"Government departments should be accountable for providing needy or lower-paid people with accommodation," said Li Yining, a member of the CPPCC National Committee and a noted economist from Peking University.

Purchasing a house or an apartment has become a top con-

cern in many cities as most Chinese wage-earners' salaries have increased far less quickly than real estate prices.

A survey by the State Development and Reform Commission (SDRC) found the average ratio of housing price to income is approaching 12:1 in such cities as Nanjing, the capital of eastern Jiangsu Province, one of the economic boom cities in the country's eastern coastal regions.

The ratio of housing price to disposable income should range between 4:1 to 6:1 in developing nations, according to World Bank research.

CPPCC member Song Linfei acknowledged that polarity of the real-estate market in China should draw more attention from government departments, research institutions and developers.

"Houses are special commodities, which should not be speculated like stocks and other virtual products," said Guo Songhai, director of the real estate economy research institute under the Shandong College of Economics. He also suggested taxes be levied on unused apartments and unused houses so as to avoid bubbles in the real estate market.



By Jia Ting

China's top legislative body, the National People's Congress (NPC), closed its nine-and-a-half-day annual session Monday morning after it adopted a number of work reports and ratified the Anti-Secession Law. The annual session of the top advisory body, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference

(CPPCC), also concluded.

The CPC adopted the reports on the government work, economic and social development, the central and local budgets, and the work of the NPC Standing Committee and of the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate.

(Xinhua Photo)



Deputies exiting the Great Hall of the People after the closing of the NPC session. Photo by Cheng Tieliang

## Soundbites

### Two-Child Policy Proposed

Wang Xiang, a member of the National Committee of the CPPCC, proposed that the current "one child" policy should be "cautiously" modified so as to allow a few more births in the world's most populous nation.

According to Wang, China's family planning policy which permits each couple to have only one child, has been carried out in urban areas. However, in vast rural areas, more than one child is allowed for each couple under the existing policy.

In addition, a large number of well-educated, high-income citizens hold that it is both appropriate and ideal for each family to have two children, said Wang, suggesting a "two-child" policy should be launched.

But the CPPCC National Committee member appealed for prudence on the part of the central government in readjusting its family planning policy and suggested "two children" should be set as the limit in any attempted policy move.

### Death Penalty Review Process to be Improved

China will further refine the death penalty review process this year, Chief Justice Xiao Yang, president of the Supreme People's Court, told the annual session of the National People's Congress.

Xiao Yang said in his annual work report that his court

will promote reform in the justice system. Yang did not elaborate on the details of the reforms.

China has implemented a policy of "combining punishment with leniency" rather than "severe punishments", he was quoted as saying by Human Rights magazine.

"For those who are found guilty of serious crimes, we approve capital punishment according to law," he told the NPC in his report. "For those convicted of crimes in which there are circumstances pleading for leniency, we would change from capital punishment to death penalty on probation or life imprisonment."

### Beauty Economy Questioned

Li Yaping, an NPC deputy and chairwoman of central China's Henan Provincial Women's Federation, has urged that the government caution against the trend of beauty contests being held across the country, suggesting that policies be made to regulate beauty pageants.

In a proposal submitted by the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF) to this year's session of the CPPCC National Committee, regulations were urged to prevent government departments from involving themselves in any beauty contests and limiting media reports on such contests to a "reasonable" level.

(Edited by Jia Ting)

## Calls for Dual Nationality

By Jia Ting

Calls for modifying the Nationality Law to introduce dual-nationality were raised during this year's CPPCC annual session. The proposal, submitted by China National Democratic Construction Association (CNDCA), suggested the government recognize dual-nationality and let overseas Chinese take part in the country's political consultative platform.

This is the second time the deputies brought the topic up after 12 CPPCC members jointly submitted a similar proposal in 1999.

The current law regulates that "the People's Republic of China does not recognize dual nationality for Chinese nationals."

"Any person who applies for naturalization as a Chinese national shall acquire Chinese nationality upon approval of his application," the law states. "A person whose application for naturalization as a Chinese national has been approved shall not retain foreign nationality."

According to the CNDCA, the modification of the Nationality Law to recognize dual nationality would suit the changing era and environment. Ever since the opening-up and reform period began, a number of Chinese people have

moved overseas, along with a large number of Chinese students studying and later living abroad.

Of the millions of Chinese living overseas, many are talented in specialized fields. With their knowledge of modern technology or management skills, they are eager to participate in their homeland's development, and to offer the advantages of their international background. But these people face many inconveniences when doing business or traveling in China. Thus an increasing number of people want the government to recognize dual nationality, just as over 70 other countries around the world do.

Other deputies, however, believe that the problem could be dealt with in other ways. Lin Mingmei, a deputy to the NPC and herself a returned overseas Chinese from Japan in the 1950s, suggests implementing special regulations to make it easier for overseas Chinese to visit and do business in China. "To recognize dual nationality is not realistic under the current situation. But the government could issue five-year multiple entry visas or home visiting passes for overseas Chinese, like the one for Hong Kong residents, or lower the requirement for applying for permanent residence permits," Lin said.

## Relocation of Government Offices to Suburbs Advised

By Jia Ting

Chinese political advisors have put forth suggestions that the offices of the central authorities and the Beijing Municipal Government be moved out of Beijing's downtown area and relocated in the suburbs to "ease the pressure on urban transportation and the environment."

Zhu Ming, a member of the National Committee of the CPPCC suggested a new central administrative district should be established in the northern or northwestern suburbs of the capital, to house those central authority departments whose office buildings now occupy Beijing's downtown area. The relocation

would help "ease the pressure on Beijing's urban transportation" and also "divert some population from the already overcrowded old city", explained Zhu.

Echoing Zhu's proposal, CPPCC member Cai Guoxiong suggested that the Municipal Government of Beijing should also move its seat out of the busiest Wangfujing area.

"Moving to the suburban areas will not only help slow down the soaring land prices and alleviate the traffic congestion and environmental deterioration in the Wangfujing area, but also enable the city government to upgrade office facilities and improve its working conditions," said Cai.

## Salary Ceiling for SOEs' Top Management

By Jia Ting

"The State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC) is working out a plan to limit the maximum annual salary of SOE top management, and the initial standard is likely to be set at no more than 14 times the average salary of ordinary employees," Xu Kuangdi, vice chairman of the 10th National Committee of the CPPCC, was quoted as saying by Beijing Times.

According to Liu Zhizhong, a senior advisor from southwest China's Chongqing Municipality, the income disparity between different sectors and even between different persons in the same unit has reached as high as 10 to 30 times.

"The SASAC has taken notice of this problem and is formulating certain regulations to narrow the salary gap in the same unit," said Xu.

Established in March 2003 as the supreme watchdog over state assets, the SASAC and its sub-branches at various levels are overseeing the management of 150,000 SOEs with total assets worth more than 11 trillion yuan (US\$1.32 trillion).

China's SOEs make up nearly 50 percent of the country's total industrial fixed assets and receive nearly 60 percent of the domestic bank loans each year, but they contribute merely one third of China's annual industrial output value.

## College Enrollment for More Fair

By Liu Zhaoxi

Some NPC delegates and CPPCC members talked about the unfairness of college recruitment systems. For a long time, it has been the case that with the same score in the College Entrance Examination, students in Beijing or Shanghai could be enrolled in a key university, while those in Hebei could only go to an inferior school. This is mainly because the key universities assign larger enrollment quota to cities like Beijing and Shanghai.

Zhou Hongyu, NPC delegate and professor at Huzhong Normal University, pointed out several reasons for the disparity. The key universities, for example, receive support not only from the state,

but also their local governments and therefore intend to provide favorable enrollment policy to local examinees. For many reasons, major cities like Beijing and Shanghai have more key universities than other cities.

He suggested that to resolve the problem, a step-by-step reform would be advisable. He also proposed that in deciding the number of students from a certain area for college enrollment, four elements should be taken into account: the overall population of that province or city; the total number of examinees in the College Enrollment Exam; the number of examinees registered for the enrollment of the key universities; and the previous quota for the area.



# Traditional Operas: Arts at the Brink

By Dong Nan

When most people in this country think of China's traditional dramatic forms, Peking Opera and Kunqu Opera quickly come to mind. Few are aware that 394 kinds of traditional operas have developed in China over its long history, and 367 varieties could still be seen on stages as of the mid-1980s.

But today, their ranks are dwindling, and a survey recently conducted by the Traditional Opera Institution under the Chinese Arts Academy has found that 100 traditional operas have vanished forever.



An ancient stage in Guobi, Shanxi Province, considered the oldest standing stage in China



A 1980s photograph of Zhadao Xuecai, an ancient skill in Qinqiang opera now lost



Tiao Opera preserves some elements of Yuan-era Yuanzaju.

## Sad songs

When those operas disappeared, they took with them important chapters in China's cultural history and precious aspects of this country's cultural heritage, Liu Wenfeng, who led the survey, said.

In 1983, there were 49 kinds of traditional operas performed in Shanxi Province, but in the past 20 years, 21 forms, many of which had long histories and included elements of ancient operas, have died out, Liu added.

Among the extinct forms is Saixi, or Sai Opera, which developed and reached its peak during the Song Dynasty (960 – 1297), making it excellent primary material for the study of arts and society of that era. The art of Saixi was passed down from parents to children among a group of people known as the "Yuehu" and managed to survive for centuries.

By the 1980s, however, there were only two families in all of Shanxi who could perform Sai Opera. The youngest generation did not learn the tradition, and the last generation of elders who held the secrets to the opera have passed on, taking the art form with them.

Duixi, or Dui Opera, native to southeast Shanxi, is dying out under similar conditions. The form flourished in the Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644), and scripts and lists of plays written in the time of the Ming emperor Wanli (1573 – 1620) were found in the 1980s. But that discovery did not lead to a revival, and today no more than three people, all in their 80s, in the town of Shangdang knew how to perform Duixi, the survey found.

Heyang, Shaanxi Province is home to Tiaoqi (Tiao Opera), which preserves some characteristics of Yuanzaju, a poetic dramatic form from the Yuan Dynasty (1279 – 1368). One such element is the presence of a jester-like character, who takes the stage before an opera starts, satirizes current politics and affairs and then provides an introduction to the story of the opera. Liu's researchers saw people in a Shaanxi village perform Tiaoqi in the 1980s, but the lead roles were acted by two men in their 70s, who have since died.

Many other traditional operas have not completely died out, but



A photo taken in the 1980s of Chang Yongdang performing in Haotian Tower, a Tiaoqi Opera work

Photos provided by Liu Wenfeng

are teetering at the edge of extinction. Handiao Erhuang opera, formed in the Qing Dynasty (1644 – 1911) was a direct influence on Peking Opera. In the 1960s, there were more than 20 Handiao Erhuang troupes in Shaanxi, where it trailed only Qinqiang, the most influential opera in mid-northwest China, in terms of popularity. In 1982, though, only six troupes were still performing. Today there is just one, the Ankang Hanju Troupe in Ankang Town, which is hanging on by a thread at the verge of bankruptcy. Most residents of Ankang were not even aware their town was home to such a troupe, the survey found.

Dachengxi (Dacheng Opera) of Putian, Fujian Province developed in the middle of the Qing Dynasty. Its founder was a monk, who adopted Buddhist music and parables into the opera. Now it is only performed by a privately-funded group of enthusiasts, most in their 40s and 50s, in Quanzhou.

"Modern people might not see much artistic value in traditional operas, but they have enormous historical and cultural value," Liu said.

## Can art survive in the market?

The traditional opera troupes and artists that had managed to hang on generally led hard lives, the survey found.

Liu said most running traditional opera troupes were founded in the 1950s and 1960s under the planned economy, when all funds needed for their operation were provided by local governments. Those consistent funding sources have dried up since China began market-oriented reforms in the 1980s and governments have been trying to push troupes into the market to find private backers.

Local governments in Fujian used to cover 60 to 80 percent of the wages of traditional opera performers, and the rest came from ticket sales. But in the past few years, many performers who joined troupes in the 50s or 60s have retired, and government funds have gone to cover their retirement benefits instead of supporting active artists, who now only get 20 to 40 percent of their wages from the government.

The Lisheng Troupe, a Puxian Opera troupe in Xianyou town, Fujian, receives 600,000 from the government every year and ticket sales bring in 300,000 yuan, but the group's annual operating budget is 1.4 million yuan, meaning it is falling 500,000 yuan short. The average wage paid to traditional opera performers in south Fujian was 700 yuan a month, much lower than average, the survey found.

In the face of such economic adversity, it is no wonder many artists, concerned about the instability of their income, are trying to find work on the side or changing their professions completely in order to earn a better living.

"I love performing very much and being a traditional opera artist has been my dream since I was a child," Wang Shaoyuan, former president of the Lisheng Troupe, a prominent Putian Opera artist and the winner of the 17th Plum Award (the top drama and traditional opera award in China) has said. "But who knew the troupe's situation would be so bad. To make ends meet, we had to try to perform night and day, leaving no time to rehearse new plays or really refine our skills. Eventually, because of the financial insecurity of that life, I had to leave the troupe and try to find another

way to make a living."

The hardscrabble lives of troupe members has led few young people to want to follow in their footsteps. Most traditional opera schools in Shanxi, Shaanxi and Fujian only enrolled around a dozen new students a year, few of whom were especially gifted performers, the survey said.

## Losing to television

The reasons for the dilemma facing traditional operas were complicated, but the main factor was massive changes in people's lifestyles, Liu explained.

"It may come as no surprise that the market for traditional operas in cities has shrunk, but in recent years, fewer people in rural areas have been watching traditional opera too," he said, adding that the rising popularity of television had taken a great toll on traditional means of entertainment.

"Traditionally, opera performances in rural areas were not only artistic events, they were forums for social communication, as local people would gather before the stage and talk about this and that as they watched the show. Now that style of interaction does not exist."

Liu recommended the government pay more attention to protecting traditional opera resources and not force them into the ruthless environment of the open market. He also appealed for local leaders and scholars to make efforts to record and preserve ancient traditional operas so that they could survive or at least their cultural value could last if the operas themselves do not.

"Without better protection," Liu said, "within the next 10 years, 100 more traditional operas will disappear forever."

## English Tripping Off Tongues of More Beijingers

By Dong Nan

More than one quarter of people in Beijing can converse, to some degree, in a foreign language, the Beijing Speaks English Program Organizing Committee announced at its annual meeting last week. The committee said the specific number of the city's "foreign language population," defined as people who could handle at least simple communication and read at least basic articles in a foreign tongue, hit 4.05 million in 2004, up 410,000 from 2003.

Beijing has a total population of 14.56 million, meaning foreign language speakers made up 27.8 percent of all people in the city, the committee said. The vast majority of foreign language speakers, 3.32 million to be exact, are above 18 years old.

The committee did confess that some 61 percent of speakers had low to moderate levels of ability, while just over 25 percent qualified as mid- to high level and only 13.1 percent qualified as high level foreign language speakers.

English dominated the ranks of foreign languages, accounting for a whopping 97.3 percent of Beijing's foreign tongue speakers. Pulling a distant second was Japanese (11 percent), followed by Russian (4.3 percent), German (2.4 percent) and French (2.4 percent). Speakers of other languages, including Spanish and Korean, came in at under one percent.

Among people who knew English, 18.5 percent used English every day or very often, up five percent from 2002, the committee said.

The organizing committee predicted that in time for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the capital's "foreign language population" would rise to five million, making up 35 percent of all people in the city.

## Protect Your Rights

By Dong Nan

Tuesday marked China's 19th annual observance of World Consumer Rights and Interests Day. This time around, the Social Survey Institute of China conducted a survey of 1,500 people in major domestic cities to poll their thoughts about their rights as consumers and how to protect them.

The survey found that more than half of respondents often thought about protecting their rights, and many could recite the phone numbers of local consumer association hotlines, while only three percent never thought about the matter.

When asked "what do you think are the most crucial areas for protecting consumers' rights," 77 percent chose "unfair commercial terms", followed by food and medicine safety (73 percent) and real estate and community services (65 percent).

Though only 38 percent of respondents said most of their problems could be solved by consumers' associations, most people surveyed expressed appreciation of those associations' efforts. One third thought observing the March 15 Consumer's Day could solve many practical problems and one half said advertising for the day improved public awareness of the need to protect consumer rights.

### What do you think are the most crucial areas for protecting consumers' rights? (%)

Unfair commercial terms	77
Food and medicine security	73
Real estate and community management	65
Telecommunications	60
Railway and air transportation	59
Prices of health care and medicines	57
Prices of education and training	47
Fraudulent business methods	45
Water, electric power, heating and gas supply	42
Construction and home furnishing material security	39
Cosmetic security	31



# Chinese Berkeley Student Killed in Car Accident



Wang Jie

By Liu Zhaoxi

Shanghai teachers Wang Jiaqing and Zhang Baozhen did not get their regular Sunday phone call from their son Wang Jie on February 27. It was the first time he hadn't called in two years since he left Shanghai to pursue his Ph.D at the University of California (UC), Berkeley in the United States. Wang had been involved in a car accident a few days before.

On March 1, Wang's parents arrived in Oakland, California, where their son was hospitalized and in a coma. Ten days later, Wang died of breathing exhaustion. He was 24.

The tragedy began when Wang Jie's car was hit by another car being driven by a criminal suspect fleeing police on February 23. Wang sustained severe brain damage in the accident. The family has been questioning whether the police chase played a role in the scale of the accident and who should be held responsible. The California Highway Patrol is still conducting its investigation.

## Struggle to live

Wang Jie went to UC Berkeley to pursue a Ph.D in chemistry in 2002 after graduating from Fudan University in Shanghai. He was in his third-year of the program when the accident happened.

The collision occurred at about 9pm on February 23 at the intersection of San Pablo and Ashby avenues in Berkeley. 29-year-old Adam Jones of Albany, California ran the red light and was heading down Ashby before hitting Wang's car, which was traveling northbound on San Pablo Avenue, according to Judy Lieberman, a spokeswoman for the city of Albany.

Ambulances rushed Wang, Jones and a passenger who was riding in Jones's car to Highland Hospital in Oakland.

"Jie has been unconscious ever since the accident. The front and two sides of his brain are severely damaged and swollen," reads a note posted on the website of the Berkeley Chinese Students and Scholars Association (BCSSA).

The next night, Wang underwent brain surgery. Jie's family arrived before long and was told by the hospital that 90% of Wang's brain was dead and there was very little chance for him to survive, local media reported.

"After the doctors talked to them and said there was a very low chance of survival, the parents still said even if there was only a one percent chance, they still wanted to help him live," Wang's aunt, Wang Xiaqing, was quoted as saying by *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Wang's friends and family set out to find the best doctors to treat him, including Dr. Ling Feng in Beijing. Dr. Ling became famous following her successful treatment of Hong Kong TV news anchor Liu Hairuo, who also sustained severe head injuries in a train accident in 2002. In that case, however, Liu's injuries were not as severe as Wang's.

The family also contacted Dr. Geoffrey Manley, Associate Professor of Neurological Surgery of UC-San Francisco and got him to visit Wang. Both Dr. Ling and Manley concluded that there was no hope for Wang's survival, because the two sides of his brain were ruptured at the moment of the collision, according to a note posted online by Wang's friend Tao Yuefei.

Still not giving up, the family and friends contacted doctors of traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture, but they were also unable to offer a solution. Meanwhile, some of Wang's organs had become infected.

On March 9, the hospital decided to unplug Wang's respirator, leaving him breathing on his own, very weakly. Since Wang had been diagnosed as having no hope of survival, the hospital said they

could make the decision, Dai Bo, president of BCSSA, told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday. Keeping the respirator switched on would only have allowed further deterioration to Wang's body, Dai added. "It would have been more miserable," he said.

The next day, after 15 days of fighting for life, Wang stopped breathing.

## Who's responsible?

Wang Jie was the only child of his parents. He did not return to China since moving to the US in 2002, and his last reunion with his parents was in his hospital bed.

His family and friends remember Wang as a smart and charming young man who enjoyed literature and tennis. Shui Wenqing, one of Wang's schoolmates at Berkeley, told *Beijing Today* that Wang was "very nice and good-natured."

"He was completely innocent," said Wang's mother Zhang Baozhen at a March 2 press conference. "We want justice for my son."

Albany city spokeswoman Judy Lieberman told the media that an Albany police officer—whom the city has refused to identify—believed he had witnessed a drug deal inside Adam Jones' car at about 8:50pm on February 23. When the officer walked towards the car, Jones sped away. The officer chased Jones' car onto a highway but lost sight of it moments later.

As the officer drove onto Ashby Avenue, "he observed what he believed to be the same vehicle ahead of him also driving eastbound on Ashby," Lieberman said in a statement. When the officer arrived at the intersection of Ashby and San Pablo, the collision had already occurred, she said.

Harry Stern, an attorney representing the Albany officer, was quoted by *San Francisco Chronicle* on March 2 as saying, "It's my understanding that the active-pursuit portion of this incident was long over when the unfortunate collision occurred."

The California Highway Patrol is investigating the traffic collision, including how close the Albany police officer was to the suspect's vehicle or whether the pursuit was still in progress when the collision occurred, a CHP spokesman told local media on March 2.

Jones is now in custody on the charge of felony, causing death or serious bodily injury while evading an officer, Yan Renbin, vice president of BCSSA told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday.

## Lawsuit possible

The CHP investigation result is due later this month, Dai Bo told *Beijing Today*. But whatever the conclusion, there is every possibility of a lawsuit, he said.

"We want a just address of the accident, which is also the will of Wang Jie's family," Dai told *Beijing Today*. "And if the police did have any responsibility, there could be a verdict of some compensation."

The BCSSA is helping to look for witnesses of the accident and in finding a lawyer who will take the case. Yan Renbin told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday no one has yet been found. Some lawyers said it would be a difficult lawsuit to win and others were still reviewing the materials. "Even if the investigation says the policeman was actively pursuing the suspect at the time of the collision, the lawyers say it will still be difficult to find the police responsible for the accident, since the police have legal immunity according to the state law," Yan said.

Wang Mingqing, another of Wang's aunts, told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday that his parents were "not seeking anything that they are not entitled to." But she said the family did not know any details of the legal procedure: they were leaving that to the student association while the family mourns their loss. "We're all grief stricken," she said.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Dai Bo said.

By Zhou Ying

An article entitled "Five workers in Hebei province suffocated in coffins," that was spread on the Internet on March 3, claimed that five female workers at a canvas factory in Loudi town, Luancheng county, Hebei Province had been poisoned by coal gas and then immediately sent to the crematorium by the factory director without being examined by doctors.

The article aroused an angry reaction from the public, even though subsequent investigation by various newspapers found some holes in its factual accuracy.

## Unnatural death

Jia Shuangzheng, a resident in Bei Xinzhuang village, Shijiazhuang, Hebei province, received an anonymous phone call on December 23 last year, saying that his



Two of the victims

daughter and four other girls from the same village had been poisoned by coal gas, and they were now in critical condition. The caller, according to Jia, said he was a worker from the Lihua canvas factory.

According to a report in *Beijing Times* on Monday, 12 relatives of the five workers immediately went to the factory the same day, expecting to find their daughters receiving medical attention. "However, when we got there, the director of the factory took us to the crematorium instead. It was then we knew that our children were dead," Jia told *Beijing Times*.

He said that the relatives were not allowed to see the bodies of their children until five days later. "We did not even receive any explanation from the factory, and nobody would tell us where the boss was," he told *Beijing Times*.

According to Jia, the leaders of the canvas factory did not show up once during the whole process. Instead, officials from Loudi town only talked to them about compensation. "They seemed weary of our questions about the cause of death," he added.

## Focus of the controversy

Besides the amount of compensation, another issue between the two sides is whether any medical attention had been provided after the workers had been found to have been poisoned.

Liu Lianyang, the father of one of the victims, told *Beijing News* last week that what they really wanted to know was how their children had died. "We asked to have a look at the death report from the hospital, but the factory refused," Liu said.

However, the officials from Loudi town told *Beijing News* that they had already showed all the medical records to the relatives. They said they only refused to give the documents to them, as the hospital needed to keep them in its archives.

The online article alleged that the factory boss took no emergency medical measures after the five workers got poisoned. It also said one young doctor had written a death report and the five were then sent to the crematorium. "The workers in the crematorium refused to cremate them, because they thought one of them may have still been alive," Jia and Liu told *Beijing News*, although they refused to name the workers who had said this.

The investigation conducted by *Beijing News* found that actually the factory boss Wang Junwei had called in the doctors when he heard about the accident.

Wang told *Beijing News* on March 8 that his wife had found the five lying in bed on

December 23, so he immediately called Wang Xiufang, an official from Xi Xuying village committee in Loudi town, and then he dialed 120 to call for emergency doctors.

Zhang Zhimin, a doctor from Xi Xuying village also confirmed to *Beijing News* that he had received a call from an official at 10 in the morning, and he arrived at the scene soon after. "I am sure that the five were already dead when I arrived, but I did not write a death report because the emergency doctors arrived. I went home after that," he said.

Liu Shuangxiu, a doctor from the 120 emergency center, told *Beijing News* that the cardiogram of the five showed a flat line, confirming that they were dead.

## Were they suffocated?

Wang Zhijun, an official from Loudi town government, recalled to *Beijing News* on March 8 that the relatives asked to see the bodies of their children on December 27, so it was organized for them to do so.

Jia Yuzhen, the mother of one of the female workers, recalled that she saw tears on her daughter's face and that there was vomit inside the cardboard coffin. "We also saw the end of the coffin was broken. I guess it had been kicked by her feet," she added.

Speaking of the vomit, a doctor from the 120 emergency center said that they had not seen any at the scene. He said it might have been the result of moving the body.

According to the local public security bureau, they suggested conducting an autopsy on the bodies if the relatives were still suspicious about the cause of death. However, the relatives declined. Liu Lianyang explained that on the one hand they did not want their children's bodies to be subjected to such a process, and on the other, they did not trust the local doctors anyway.

Another discrepancy was that the five dead females were actually under the legal working age of 18 years old, even though documents provided by the factory said they were over 18.

## Compensation

Following negotiations with the town government, it was decided on January 3 that Lihua canvas factory should pay each family 70,000 yuan in compensation.

Wang Junwei said that he did not have that much money, so the Loudi government paid and allowed Wang to pay them back when he had the money.

"However, I still can not pay the government, so I was arrested and held for nearly two weeks until my relatives paid part of the arrears."

He said that he was now broke as a result of this incident. "The whole thing happened because the workers lacked basic security knowledge," Wang complained.

Speaking of the online article, officials from the town government said angrily that it was all rubbish, and that they were searching for the author.

According to a report in *Beijing News* on Tuesday, the relatives have agreed for an autopsy to be conducted.

The death of the five female workers shook the local area, and had an impact on local employment. Some bosses of other local canvas factories said that many female workers had not returned to work after the Spring Festival.

Zhao Zhongbao, deputy director of the Publicity Department of Luancheng County, told *Beijing News* that there were actually many problems with the management of local employment. "We are now conducting a comprehensive investigation throughout the county, especially in terms of the safety problem," Zhao added.

# Mysterious Death of Five Female Workers



One victim's mother holds the picture of her deceased daughter. Photos by Liu Binglu



By Hester Xu and Arron Chang

Wen Fang just caught a light cold. Bathed in the dim light of the living room, coiling in an armchair, she wears a mysterious and charming look, created in part by her hairstyle, reminiscent of a Japanese teenager. Sniffing from time to time, she begins to tell her story. On the wall behind her chair is a long scroll of Chinese calligraphy copied from a Buddhist sutra, her beautiful handwriting neatly sets off the yellow Xuan paper. It's already midnight, all seems to have come to a stop, except for four red-headed golden fishes swimming silently among water weeds in a big, round glass bowl placed on the tea table. Hers is a story of love. Her journey has led her to become one of the most important young photographers of her generation – lauded in Paris, jobbing for *Cosmopolitan*, and author of glossy bestselling compilations of her work. **To go to France with a dream**

Wen Fang was always a lover. She

# L'amour de Lyon of a Beijing Girl

found her first love at 15. Although the boy was simple, he was extremely kind. Despite their separation three years later, Wen Fang was lit up by this true love. She even suffered bullying from teachers and classmates for a very long time because of her personal life.

Wen Fang started to practice calligraphy at the age of six and has a special feeling for the arts. After finishing junior high school, she chose to go to a vocational school to study fashion design. Then she went to college to study art and design.

In 1996, Wen Fang became a web designer, an unusual profession at the time. One year later, she became a creative art director of a famous web company in China. In July of the same year, she and her colleagues began to discuss the possibility of setting up their own studio. "We compare ourselves with ants, each has very limited abilities and resources but we can do big things if we work together. So we decided to build a web design alliance with people working in

the web companies," She smiles. She named their studio Yimeng (alliance of the ants).

In 2002, she found a partner. The studio had also become very popular and many web designers went to the site for inspiration. Just as her career was moving forward, Wen Fang heard that the boy who had once loved her and given her confidence was living in poverty because of his kindness. Hoping to do something to help him, Wen Fang decided to shoot a film telling their love story. She began to learn French and prepared to go to France to learn filmmaking. In 2002, Wen Fang quit her job and published the book *Face the Web China Site Design* with the best website designs she selected from the alliance. She then set off for France to pursue her dream. **The man who changed her life**

In the fall of 2002, Wen Fang arrived in Lyon. Moving into a room for 10 people in a youth hostel, she started to attend French language courses. One day in October, a bored Wen Fang blundered into a glass craft

shop and got chatting to the shop owner, Vincent. He took her to meet his friend Leon, a mixed race French-Vietnamese, and the owner of a tattoo shop in China Town.

Leon's tattoo shop was located in the old quarter of Lyon. The entrance of the shop was dimly lit, vague whispers of music from Southern India could be heard from inside. In the room behind, placed on a heavy carved cabinet, were buddha figures in several materials, beneath a scroll of *Dao De Jing*, written inexpertly with a Chinese brush.

Occupying the opposite wall was a large tapestry, stuck with post-cards and pictures. The whole room had the smooth, sweet feeling of Southeast Asia, which reminded her of the spice used in Thai food and the soft arms of Indian dancers. Leon had had the shop three years. In the tattoo collections he handed to Wen Fang, she found many works with oriental influence – vivid pictures of dragons, the buddhas and some very fine details of Chinese painting. And she was surprised to find the special techniques in Chinese art for painting stones and mountains present in Leon's tattoos.

Leon wasn't tall but had a good figure. With long chestnut hair tied in a knot like a Chinese taoist, his face was handsome but not imposing. Wen Fang was most impressed by a tattoo in the shape of a waterdrop between his brows and three Chinese characters on his neck: Qi (start), Yuan (origin) and Ai (love).

Leon told her that his elder sister and he had the family name Lam-hien, which means 'forest' in Vietnamese. His first name, Leon, means 'lion' and his sister's Vietnamese name is Rosine, which means 'the one who goes to a temple'. So Wen Fang wrote down their Chinese names, Lin Shi and Lin Chan, with a brush and some Xuan paper she brought with her and gave them the work as a gift.

From that day on she often went to Leon's shop. Soon they became quite familiar with each other. One day, Leon told her that he was looking for a willing body to wear a tattoo he had designed. Tattooing is a bloody process, but despite having witnessed his work, Wen Fang still felt curious and secretly wished to be that body. But first she had to know what tattoo Leon had in mind. Three months later, perhaps due to homesickness or the sadness of a lonely girl staying in foreign country, Wen Fang agreed to let Leon create a tattoo for her, on one condition: it was not based on Leon's design, but on a dream that had haunted her for years.

The morning came and Wen Fang



Wen Fang shot a photo for her friend.



Fifty women tells stories of their breasts, for which Wen Fang shot photos.



Wen Fang shows her tattoo.

found herself sitting in Leon's tattoo chair. On the table across the room was a mounted scroll of Buddhist sutra written by Wen Fang and an incense burner with Tibetan incense burning inside. In Wen Fang's dream, a woman was leaving a house and walking towards a river. But she suddenly changed her idea and asked Leon to swap the position of the house and the river so the tattoo showed the girl going home.

Pulling her sweater up all the way to her neck with only her breast covered, Wen Fang bared her back and sat straight on the chair as instructed, legs astride the armrests.

In tattoo art, the first step is to sketch a picture on the skin with a special fountain pen. Wen Fang only realized the meaning of tattoo when the needle punctured skin. Without making a sound, she bit hard at the sweater in front of her. The acute prickle was followed by an intense burning sensation. Closing her eyes, Wen Fang tried to imagine the origin of this heat. "Probably the body and the mind follow the same laws, because love and blood can both make me feel burning," she thought.

Wen Fang taught calligraphy and sold her writings to earn some money. One night, Leon asked her to write some scrolls for his friend. When it became too late to go back to her school, she stayed at Leon's. The next morning, they found that they had had the same dream: of a

snake. Traditionally people interpret the dreaming of a snake at the same time as a sign for two people in love, and they fell in love that same day.

Everything seemed perfect at first, except for occasional quarrels. Leon had a bad temper. Despite their troubles, he proposed in 2004. With the prospect of married life in front of her, Wen Fang had to face the tough choice of whether to continue her studies in Paris or to stay and marry Leon. She had already mailed a CD of her work to L'école Louis Lumière and was admitted as the first Chinese student since it was founded in 1929. But her thoughts wavered because of her love for Leon.

She explains: "Marrying Leon was about completing an important course in my life: to build a family, rather than finding a husband who cared about me. It was just like two monks in the temple studying together in order to complete a course of Buddhist teaching." But it wasn't only her ambition that finished their relationship. Leon was a kind and caring person, but his temper made it impossible for anyone to live with him for long – even his sister couldn't stand him. With almost no friends in France and Leon the only person she could cling to, Wen Fang was deeply worried for her future. Eventually, she gave up on Leon and left for Paris.

## Set for the future

Wen Fang's love with Leon inevitably left a deep impression. She even changed her idea of studying filmmaking and studied photography instead in order to work with more freedom. At L'école Louis Lumière, she studied with such eagerness that both her teachers and her classmates regarded her with admiration. Within a year, she took part in two photography shows in a row, impressing the French audiences with her unique oriental style.

In the autumn of 2004, Wen Fang returned to Beijing and was invited by *Cosmopolitan* magazine to shoot some photos for an exhibition for breast cancer prevention. The book *The Women's Breasts Talk* based on the photos she took and interviews she made with several female celebrities is now one of the bestsellers in bookstores. Unwilling to snatch a moment of leisure, Wen Fang never stops working. After the exhibition, she immediately went to Japan to continue shooting and interview for a new book about modern life and arts in Tokyo.

Calligraphy, porcelain making, web design and photography, Wen Fang is really a girl for the 21st century – effortlessly switching between the classic and the ultra-modern world.

Photos by Bao Wei





# Books No Longer Just Books



Photo by Tian Yufeng

By Tao Lan/Li Ruifen

It is said that it was *The Bridge of Madison County*, published in China by the People's Literature Publishing House in 1995, that brought the trend of "best sellers" to the domestic book market. Over the last decade, the book market, has been chasing those trends of international publishing. Whether in terms of the binding and layout, the subject, or the design, publishers have been eager to learn from international fashions.

However, behind the image of a hot and prosperous book market, where the variety of books dazzles the eyes of readers, and bookstores and book bars spring up like mushrooms, some unusual and strange phenomena have begun to emerge. Meanwhile, the coddled and sheltered Chinese reader has become more and more confused about what constitutes the "real thing."

## Not what it seems

The best seller *Who Moved My Cheese*, brought author Spenser Johnson considerable fame. It also led to the publication of two books bearing his name that he did not write. *One Minute Yourself* and *Precious Present*, both attributed to Johnson, were big sellers in China. In fact Johnson did write a book titled *One Minute For Yourself*, but the content bore little relation to that of the fake.

According to a survey conducted by five publishing experts, in the first month of this year, there were 106 falsely attributed books on western management theories being sold in Beijing. A number of the books on the list, including *No Excuse Leadership - Lessons From The US Army's Elite Rangers* (published by China Machine Press), *Executive Ability* (published by Chang'an Publishing House), and *Simple Business Administration* (published by Harbin Publishing House), were best sellers in 2004.

Readers often have no way of knowing whether a book is really by the person it claims to be. Disreputable publishers use all sorts of tricks, such as changing one word of the book's name or the spelling of the author's name, or publishing a book with the same name as the original, before the real one is published.

## More color, less content

The popularity of *Jimmy's* cartoon books, in which pictures take up the main part, seems to have resonated with domestic publishers. Picture books are popular because they demand less attention from the reader and are easy to understand. However a pretty

appearance often masks hollow and valueless content. Selling for as much as 30 yuan, many such picture books contain little or no useful information. One journalist describes his feeling about such books as, "At present, pictures are the beautiful outer wear of books; when pictures become their "underwear" the books will be of a high level."

## Too much of a good thing

The recycling of previously popular books is another serious problem of the publishing industry. It seems that the publishers are publishing books with identical content, regardless of value. When "cheese" is popular, a great deal of cheese is "cooked" to entertain the readers; and when *Shui Zhu San Guo* (*Poach the Three Kingdoms*) reaches boiling point, the classic immediately becomes hot among the publishers.

It is said that for every legitimate set of the four classic novels (*A Dream of Red Mansions* by Cao Xueqin, *Journey to the West* by Wu Cheng'en, *Water Margin* by Shi Nai'an and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* by Luo Guan-zhong), there are more than 200 "illegitimate" versions on the market. Such repetition is a not only a waste of resources, but also highlights the lack of creativity among Chinese publishers.

## Magical tales

Since Harry Potter was introduced to China, a flood of copycat books have hit the market.

Along with this magical trend, some magazines, which used to focus on science fiction, have failed to resist the temptation and moved their focus to magical stories. However, China has never been short of its own imaginary tales. From *Shan Han Jing* (*Mountain and Sea Classics*) to *Feng Shen Yan Yi* (*The Romance Of Heroes and Gods*), many classic Chinese works are highly recognized for their imagination and creativity.

## False Claims

Some books, marked as having "sales of more than 50,000 volumes within one month," have actually had only 10,000 copies printed; Others, "recommended by the *Washington Post*," or "praised by management master Tom Peterson," have never even been read by those recommenders.

Another way of catching the eye of readers is to relate the book to a certain celebrity. Some would have the famous name printed even larger than the title of the book, while others would choose to criticize or slander others to gain publicity.



By Lene Chau

Anyone with an interest in art cannot have failed to notice that Western masterpieces have stirred great passion among Chinese art lovers and painters alike.

When the Millennium Art Museum hosted a Salvador Dali exhibition in 2000, long queues snaked the length of the street as people waited for a chance to glimpse those 20th century masterpieces. Dali's surreal art has been as influential in China as in the rest of the world, and many young art students have studied the works and life of this eccentric Spanish painter.

In May 2004, internationally acclaimed film maker and artist Wim Wenders (*Paris, Texas*, *Wings of Desire*) presented his photo exhibition *Pictures from the Surface of the Earth* in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou after showing them in Sydney, London and Berlin. The exhibition brought Chinese viewers closer to landscapes void of humanity but charged with a powerful notion of the human presence.

In October 2004, the French Impressionist Painting Exhibition was held at the National Gallery in Beijing. Visitors filled the halls from dawn till dusk, standing in front of a Gustave Courbet, a Camille Corot, or a Francois Millet, losing all perception of time.

"These exhibitions are basically held to boost cultural exchanges between China and the world," said Alexander Ochs, an active art dealer in Berlin and Beijing, who is now presenting contemporary German painter Jorg Immendorff's works at his White Space gallery.

If you're like most Chinese gallery-goers, you probably don't know much about Immendorff. But that's about to change

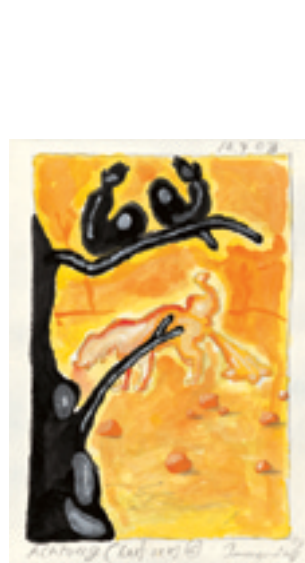


thanks to Ochs' latest show, titled Immendorff! which features 80 works by the artist. The show, which provides a close look at Immendorff's works including painting, prints and sculpture from 2003 to 2004, has much to offer Chinese audiences.

Born in 1945 in northern Germany, the last year of World War II, Immendorff was of the generation that experienced post-war disillusionment that politicized every waking moment. As a student in the 1960s, he faced the task of examining Germany's tragic history and its fraught relationship with modernity. This forced him to devise a balancing act between eras.

Immendorff is one of the most significant, as well as controversial, contemporary German artists. He has won numerous prizes, including the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. Berlin's Neue Nationalgalerie is currently preparing a major exhibition of his work.

China is an "old flame" for Immendorff. A Maoist as a young man and constantly influenced by the Beuys'esque idea of a "direct democracy," Immendorff travelled to China in the 1980s with the aim of meeting young artists at the



## Western Art Makes Waves in China

Central Academy of Fine Arts. He met Fang Lijun, now a renowned figurative painter, and the two have remained friends ever since.

In 1992, Immendorff exhibited his work in China for the first time. In Autumn 1997, the artist was appointed visiting professor at the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts. Another exhibition took place in Tianjin, in 2002, as well as two major shows, one at the Millineum Art Museum in Beijing, the other at the Shanghai Museum.

According to Ochs, Immendorff's health has seriously declined in the past couple of years, to the point where he no longer has the use of his arms. "These works are the last by his own hands," said Ochs, who, as a good friend of Immendorff, believes it is important to present the artist's last works to

Chinese audiences.

A painter, sculptor, graphic designer and stage designer who raises in his works the question of the significance of an artwork in the modern age, investigates political and historical dimensions with their consequences for each individual as well as for society, Immendorff explores in a self-reflecting way his own existence as an artist, in the context of the modern age.

Immendorff has a strong affection for the artistic tradition and iconography of China. Over the past few years, he has been introducing, among others, the monkey as a repetitive motif. In the Chinese horoscope, the sign of the monkey stands for continuous turbulence and creativity, but also for wisdom.

His current works are distinguished by an abstract flatness and the expressive choice of colors; oil paintings as well as watercolors seem like paintings inside paintings. Several intertwined image areas make the works vibrate, and thus create strong reflexes on the side of the recipient. He also tackles more private subjects of his personal life. One of the series is called *Last Sex*, where a lot of dark colors and abstract images are used.

"I think his works are too abstract for me," commented Ren, who works in an advertising company near the gallery. "I don't understand what the artist is trying to say." Her colleague, Li, a graphic designer, said that he understood more of the techniques Immendorff used in his works but still found it hard to reach the mind behind these paintings.

Immendorff can be seen at White Space, at 798, until April 23. The gallery is open from midday to 6 pm, Tuesday to Sunday.





## What's New

By Tom Spearman  
CD

PJ Harvey: Uh Huh Her



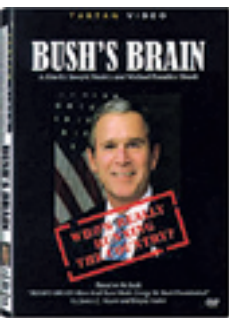
The Guardian described this as one of those albums that “most people would prefer to admire from a discreet distance, preferably out of earshot.” People converted to the particular charms of PJ Harvey by her previous album, *Stories from the City, Stories from the Sea*, will find this one somewhat harder work. Stories was a slickly produced album that received both the customary critical acclaim and somewhat unusual commercial success, but with *Uh Huh Her* Harvey has returned to her more spartan roots: raucous, driving guitar, angry lyrics spitting fury at former lovers. Harvey played all the instruments on this album herself, except the drums, but as well as the raw energy there are also some willfully weird moments, such as the track featuring seagulls, just making seagull noises...and nothing else. That's not to say there's nothing enticing here: final track *The Darker Days of Me and Him* in particular has a certain mournful quality. But this is largely devoted fans-only territory.

DVD  
Shall We Dance



One of the most depressing things about Hollywood is the incessant stream of pointless, awful remakes. *Alfie* was one of the most heinous recent examples, but *Shall We Dance* is surely as bad: there are some films you don't need to see to know you should avoid. There is one benefit, however, to the creative bankruptcy driving all these rehashes, which is that larger audiences get to discover the original. The whole point of *Shall We Dance*, the original anyway, is the Japanese setting, and the risky intimacy and breaking of social barriers that dancing represents. It's a charming, often hilarious movie. You may need to shell out for the DVD9 version though, as the DVD5 lacks English subtitles.

Bush's Brain



You can almost hear the Darth Vader breathing apparatus in the background. This documentary paints a lurid portrait of that prince of darkness of our times, otherwise known as Karl Rove, senior political advisor to president Bush. The film is based on the book *Bush's Brain: How Karl Rove Made George W. Bush Presidential*, and exposes how weedy, conniving school nerd Rove had his eyes on the big time even from early in his childhood; how he used dirty tricks to win school debating competitions; how opposing campaigns were thwarted by calling in politically motivated FBI agents. Rove apparently got his hands on a draft of the book before its publication and sent off an angry memo to the authors. The memo is read out in a sinister, nasal whine at intervals through the film. Though it is a bit of a hatchet job, the film grips like a soap opera and the interviews are interesting.

By Jacqueline Yu

Actress Yang Ting, famous for her work with director Meng Jinghui, made her own directing debut last Thursday at the North Theatre. She has chosen *The Well of the Saints*, a dark comedy written a century ago by JM Synge (1871-1909), one of Ireland's most famous playwrights.

One of the points of interest for the audience was the fact that the performance saw Yang Ting getting back together with her classmates from the Central Academy of Drama. Indeed, producing a drama together was something they had all promised each other ten years ago when the fifteen students graduated.

“We used to perform part of the play while we were in school and it was a great success. A while ago, I happened to pick up the script again and found it still interested me, so I talked to my classmate Mao Hai, and said ‘Let's make it’. And gradually, one by one, every one of my classmates agreed with the idea,” Yang recalled.

*The Well of the Saints* proved a little confusing for some members of the audience. It's a parable with a variety of thought-provoking vignettes, rather than a traditional character study or story that draws us into its world. One theatergoer remarked, “Obviously, ten years later, they are still students.”

The set was simple, with only a church, two benches and a small tree hung with some little yellow lamps, and a crossroads where, at the opening of the play, a married couple, Mary and Martin Doul, who are both blind beggars, stop for a rest.

They've never seen each other's face, but, based on what the locals have said to her, Mary believes she's beautiful and that her husband is handsome too. So, both are happy despite their condition.

When a wandering saint cures the Douls of blindness with holy well water, they suddenly see each other's face for the first time and each decides the other is extremely ugly. The locals had been

# Wandering in the Well of the Saints

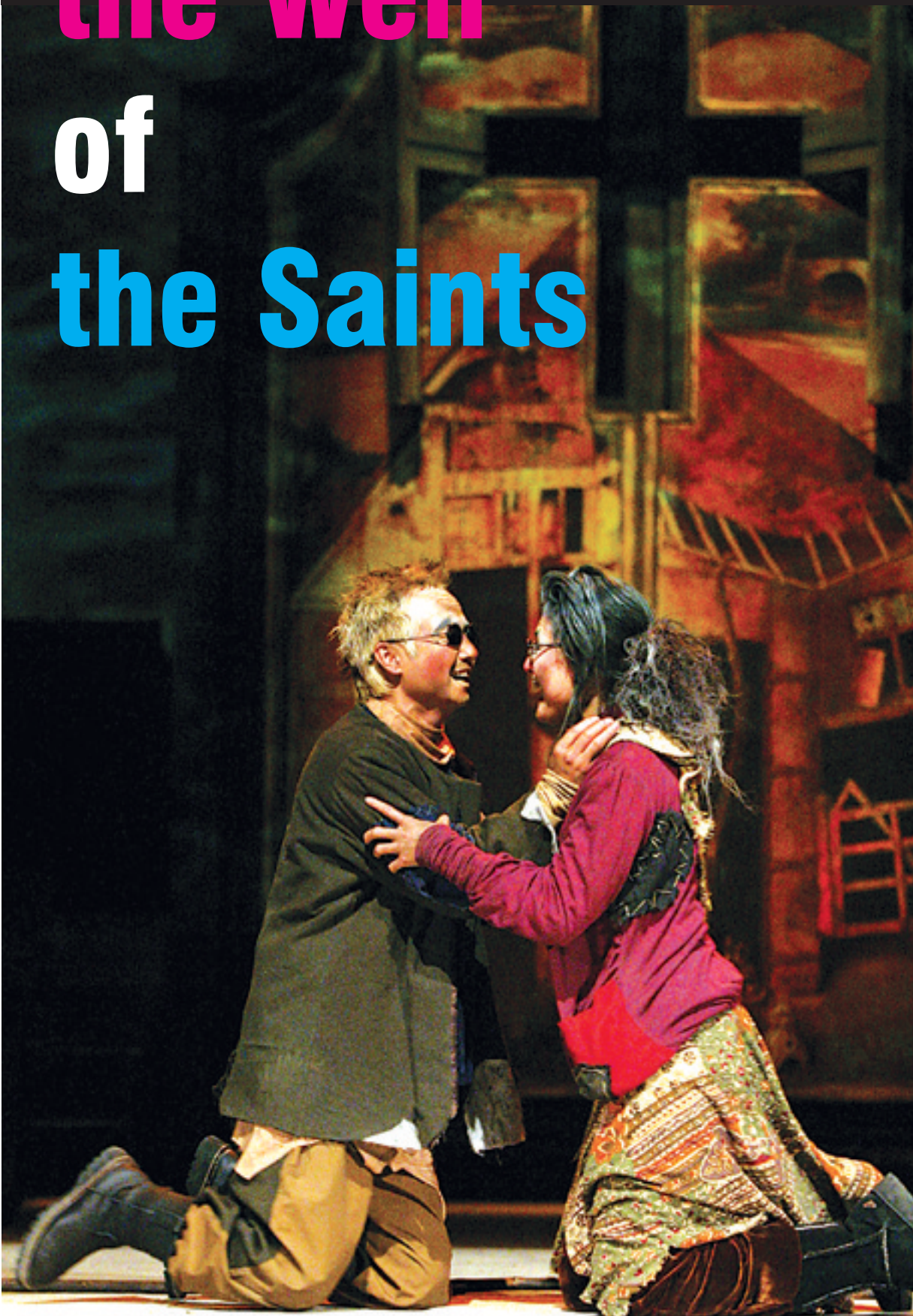


Photo by Tian Yufeng

lying to Mary about her beauty. The Douls' lives are turned upside down by their restored sight.

As the play progresses, it raises a number of profound questions. Are people sometimes better off imagining the way things are rather than actually seeing and knowing reality? Is restored sight a gift if a person's cruel heart isn't also healed or if the community doesn't provide support? When we give people something we're sure will benefit them, is there ever a danger that the gift could complicate and disrupt their lives more than help them?

The play's setting and the characters may be from a strange era and culture, but the questions raised by the play couldn't be more relevant to contemporary society. “Contemporary society is very impetuous. All people go in the same direction, not necessarily choosing a life that suits them,” Yang explained, regarding the modern significance of the play.

The cast certainly did a good job. Yu Yuexian has a beautiful face and Mao Hai, though a relatively small figure, is handsome, so they put on plenty of make-up to make themselves look appropriately ugly as Mary and Martin.

Tang Shuiyu was natural and had a commanding strength as Timmy the smith. Li Xiaohong was appealing as Molly Byrne. It was easy to see why Timmy would fall in love with her and why Martin would covet her. Shi Ning as the Saint had a seriousness that made the locals become quiet when he first appeared, while later in the play he presented a humorous touch, thus bringing doubt upon his identity as a true saint.

Where: North Theater, Beibingmasi Hutong, 67 Jiaodaokou Nandajie, Dongcheng When: 7:30 pm, till April 3

Admission: 40-180 yuan

Tel: 6404 8021

## Rock the Opera

By Wang Yao

After a series of troubles and even a break-up, the band Ling Dian (Zero) have rediscovered their voice and issued their latest album *Feng Lei Dong (Wind, Thunder, Move)* with their new label Poly Music. The album is mainly a collection of re-edited old songs, with styles ranging from ballad to Peking opera and pop.

The intro is a reworking of the song *Da Hu Shang Shan (Beat the Tiger on the Hill)*, a song about revolution that now sounds a bit more revolutionary. The style is like Peking Opera, with the guitar sound imitating that of traditional instruments, while the guitar solo sounds more like rock music. The vocals are strong and powerful, even a little bit hoarse.

There's something uncomfortable about the re-editing of the tune, lyrics and nostalgia of the song *Rang Wo Men Dang Qi Shuang Jiang (Let's Row)*. The original was a sweet song that could rouse a warm sense of nostalgia in people born in the 1950s, and people today still have a deep impression of the soft and ringing voices of women singing for something happy and to show their positive attitude to life at that time. But Zero have given the new version a more oppressive sense of nostalgia. The lyrics that speak of a cool breeze used to represent a mild spring wind and the happiness of life but now the vocals are hoarse and sad, implying the hardship people have seen. Also, the rapping in the repeated section seems a little out of place. The same sense of disharmony also blights the song *Xi Wang De*



Tian Ye (A Farmland with Hope).

The new version of *Gen Zhe Gan Jue Zou (Follow the Feeling)*, a 1980s style pop song, is also surprising. The beginning is quite soft and then the whole song slides into a post-punk style. The guitar riff is full of Japanese punk features, hardcore and rapid. The keyboards use a light tempo to give a sense of excitement and recalling the good old days. The repeated paragraph is the most emotional part, building to a climax. If the previous version of the song was sentimental, bordering on pessimistic, the new one is filled with ardor and emotion.

The only new song is *Guo Le Jin Tian Hui Yong Yuan (After Today, We'll Last Forever)*. The song is about what the band has experienced, and what they hope to achieve. It's a moving song, and could yet be as popular as Zero's best-known song *Ai Bu Ai Wo (Love Me or Not)*.

## What Kind of Noise is That?

By Wang Yao

Last Friday, the Nameless Highland Bar hosted Belgian ambient electro DJ C-drik Fer-mont and he brought along a full range of styles, including some fairly intense industrial noise.

C-drik Fer-mont's first solo album, *Dissolution*, was based on simple melodies, minimalist sounds and nostalgic harmonies, but tonight he was providing a more hardcore experience. He certainly had an impressively punk appearance, with piercings everywhere.

His appearance seemed to blend in with the music, which initially sounded both casual and strange before building. Though the music had an electro-tech feel, some of it sounded like pure noise, more than industrial noise. Some listeners said that when they listened to it, they

felt like they were surrounded by trains, planes taking off, thunder, screaming and even the noise of a building site. He did not play any pop disco but he did bring curiosity, and thought provoking music.

Perhaps the lighting could have been improved upon. While the music was busy creating an atmosphere of fantasy, and moving from a daze to over excitement, the lighting could have had a stronger effect. The dull reds and greens had nothing to do with the magical ambient tunes and people who had watched DJ performances overseas said that the lighting of the show was always a vital part of the whole thing.

On the night, besides C-drik Fer-mont, the female German DJ Alex Czinczel was a supporting artist who showed off her scratch skills. Chinese artists Yan Jun and the band FM3 also played.

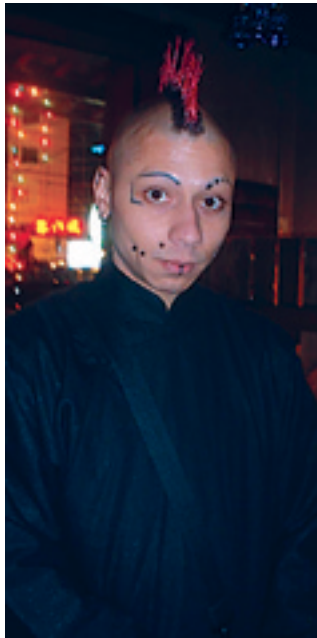


Photo by Qiao Xiangyang



# Know Your Labor Rights

By Xie Lixue

Relationships between employers and employees are always subtle when labor disputes arise. Default on salary, lack of insurance, unfair contracts, capture of personal documents, discrimination .... Such issues are threatening the rights and interests of numerous employees in China. How to better protect your interest? Experts give the answers.

## Default on salary

Under a new regulation issued by the central government last December, employers must compensate staff for defaulting on salary payment.

However, illegal business operators are still finding ways to withhold wages, says Qian Lian, chief for labor disputes arbitration of Xuanwu District.

"For instance, setting irregular pay days, postponement

of monthly income, or reducing overtime pay," he said.

Before signing a work contract, employees should make sure of the amount and exact date for paying wages, know the regulation for the overtime pay, and inform the labor department of any irregularities.

## Lack of insurance

In Haidian District, a common phenomenon in some start-ups is that they offer no, or inadequate insurance to their employees. Li Li, chief for labor disputes arbitration of Chongwen District summarized three unreasonable excuses: no insurance for probation workers, no insurance for people whose personal documents are not at hand and inadequate insurance in light of the actual standard.

Zuo Xiangqi, an expert on the labor law, told *Beijing Youth Dai-*

*ly* that even during the probationary period, the relationship of employment had been formed, so the insurance is a must.

## Unfair contract

In Fengtai District, disputes caused by unfair contracts have always been on the top list. Wang Jie, chief for labor disputes arbitration of Xicheng District said that some companies abuse the rules of the labor law. For example, they will set up rules governing marriage or pregnancy of female employees, establish their own right to interpret regulations, or not respond to injuries suffered on the job.

"Be careful when signing the contract and don't sacrifice your legitimate rights," Zuo warned.

## Withholding of personal documents

In China, everyone has a personal file, called *dang'an*, record-

ing education and employment records. Every year, people encounter problems relating to the transfer of such documents when changing jobs. Qian said that the personal document was important for calculating working years, obtaining insurance, or finding new jobs, but bore little relevance to the employer. So both sides need to find reasonable ways to coordinate and preserve the documents.

## Protecting the weak

Pregnant women and immigrant workers are the most discriminated in workplace. However Zhang Yadong, head of the Fengtai labor dispute arbitration section said, "For instance, hearings on disputes involving dismissal of pregnant women and breast-feeding periods are now more inclined to support those people, and protect their benefits and rights."

## Expats at Work:



Bill Linton

## House for Career, Home for Appreciation

By Xie Lixue

Bill Linton, an architect from the United States, is working to transform and decorate villas in Beijing. In May 2002, he moved from the Middle East, where he designed and created a fabulous garden palace for nine years with other architects. He first worked in Beijing as a senior designer for a foreign-owned company, doing interior design for offices, apartments, and even a hospital. However, one little change inspired him to set up his own architectural/interior design office. Let's find out what he said to *Beijing Today*.

**Beijing Today: What inspired you to work in residential design?**

**Bill Linton:** When I first came to Beijing, I was working for a company that did interior design for corporate offices. Once, we were asked to renovate three apartments to create sample units that would increase sales for the building owners. To do this, we removed a section of wallpaper and painted the wall blue, added lights to brighten the apartment, set the dining table as if a meal was about to be served, and added books, flowers, and other accessories to the apartment.

When the owner entered, he said: "Oh, my gosh, this is totally transformed, it's so much better than before!"

While I enjoyed working with the corporate clients, I found my greatest pleasure in creating beautiful one-of-a-kind works that fill the owners with joy and happiness. So after finishing one year contract, I started my own business renovating and decorating houses.

**BT: What satisfaction can you get from your current business?**

**Linton:** I am delighted when I see my clients living happily in the "art-works" that I've created for them. Each person, each family, is unique. To design well you have to get to know them very well. You have to understand their lifestyle, and the things that make them happy and content.

Designing a house is like making a custom-tailored suit. You have to know your clients very well. The key is discovering the client's dreams.

**BT: Do you plan to enlarge your business?**

**Linton:** Currently, I have a young Chinese man working with me. In the long term, I hope my business will succeed. My aim is to grow slowly but safely; it's important to have a solid foundation. I'm looking forward to the time when more I can provide work for more people.

There are differences between the US and China when it comes to running a start-up company. In Beijing there are many papers to prepare before you can open your business. But more capital is required if you want to start an office in the US. I've always worked for others since I graduated with master's degree in 1985. Now is the time to work for myself.

Photo provided by Bill Linton



Exhibitions are more carnival-like and conferences more leisurely. Designers, therefore, are becoming more important.

Photo by sina.com

## Creating Chinese Brands: Exhibition and Conference Designers

By Xie Lixue

More than 3,000 large-scale exhibitions and conferences are held every year throughout the country, such as the China Beijing International High-tech Expo, China International Stationery Expo and China International Beauty Week. These activities bring income of over million yuan and help promote economic growth for those related industries.

While around 1 million professionals work in this area, only 150,000 are involved in the roles of planning, operating and managing, according to figures released by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. Now the exhibition and conference industry is seeing a prospective boom period, having been listed as one of the "new careers" by the government last December.

Those planners conduct market research, provide comprehensive plans, sell the projects and manage on-the-spot meetings and expos, which are the key positions in every program-providing company.

"We suggest our staff create practical and visual arts for the meeting or expo, in order to meet the need for showing and appreciating exhibitions at the same time," Luo Jian, marketing department manager of Beijing Zanglan Exhibition Co, told *Beijing Today*.

According to Luo, designers generally study the information of all participants and their exhibits in advance. Then they offer an original plan for the style of the exhibition platform and individual booths, which can fully convey the concepts and ideas of the exhibitors.

Li Ling, assistant at the project service

office of Beijing Haifu Exhibition Service told *Beijing Youth Daily* that the entrance salary was about 2,000 yuan per month, or 2,500 yuan for professional college graduates and bachelors. After working for five years, it would reach 5,000.

Currently, Shanghai Teachers University and Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade have established exhibition design courses and programs for their undergraduates. Over 20 universities and colleges in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou are preparing to start the courses.

"With many professionals enter the market and for the coming 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and the World Exposition Shanghai China 2010, good exhibition designers have plenty of space to produce subtle works and create Chinese brands," Li said.

## New Professions Announced

By Xie Xiaolin

On March 13, a further 10 new job categories were revealed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. The 10 new categories are: credit manager, network editor, real estate planner, job information analyst, toy designer, gold investment analyst, company culture manager, household textiles designer, electric-water controls worker, and manager of intel-

ligent buildings.

This is the third such announcement that the Ministry of Labor and Social Security has made on new job categories. The announcement will be followed by new standards and qualifying examinations for those jobs. Training will vary with development and further details will be declared by the end of March, according to Mr. Chen, head of the Standards Department at the

Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

In addition, the expert panel of Ministry of Labor and Social Security is to conduct research for another 10 new job categories. These are expected to include: sports broker, health guide, instructor of agricultural technology, art designer for games, program designer for games, consultant for studying abroad and immigration consultant.

## Finding Qualified Certificates

(Continued from last week)

By Xie Lixue

**ICAD** (International Commercial Art Designer):

ICAD is the internationally recognized certificate for art professionals, organized by the International Commercial Art Designer Association (ICADA) and introduced to China in 2003 by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. It is a four-level qualification test, from D-level to A-level, with each certificate indicating the different academic and practical abilities of the holder.

There are three subjects in the examination, theory, basic design and creative design. After passing the exam and authentication by ICADA, the certificate will be awarded.

The certificate has unified standards on teaching materials, examination, marking and appraisal. Also, candidates have a flexible way to choose more than 500 examination centers in more than 20 countries around the world.

For the test on April 2 and 3 of this year, applicants can log onto the website: [www.icad.org.cn](http://www.icad.org.cn) to find more details.

**GMP** (General Management Performance):

GMP is a test for the management qualifications in diverse industries. It was organized by the National Occupational Skill Testing Authority of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and is the nationally recognized certificate for the management skill of managers and employees in both state-owned and foreign companies.

Now the test centers around the country are preparing for the application of the exam on April 10.

## Seeking Employment

A swimming coach from Moldova is looking for a job in Beijing. Qualifications as: Coach/Judge at National Standard; Olympian (Ranked 12th in the world in 1995), World Cup Silver Medallist; Experienced children's coach at all levels; Qualified driver (B, C, D, E categories), bodybuilding instructor; Proficient in Russian, English, Romanian, Ukrainian.

Contact Max Cazmirciuc at: 13126711168 or email: [mcazmirciuc@yahoo.com](mailto:mcazmirciuc@yahoo.com)

Web design graduates are available. For details visit: [www.inhb.com](http://www.inhb.com), or call Liu or Tang at: 0311-3160000. Email: [luogq@heinfo.net](mailto:luogq@heinfo.net)

Laid-off workers are providing PC maintenance services such as system upgrade, virus detection and removal, data copying and recovering, system utilization and security. Call: 6732 7217

Female Beijinger, 39, has a decade's experience in import-export business, human resources management, interpretation and secretarial work. I have a good command of computer skills and am good at English, both writing and speaking. Mobile: 13611163663

A retired president and CEO of two Canadian companies interested in teaching English or French in China. Cellphone: 1352 0549132, email: [Jeanguyfurois@aol.com](mailto:Jeanguyfurois@aol.com)

## Situations Vacant

Shangqiu Fuyuan Rubio Bio-engineering Co. in Henan Province is looking for marketing professionals, fine chemical professionals, chemical analyzers, IT software and network developers, pharmaceutical professionals and nutrition analyzers.

Tel: 0370-2268636, 13781596019, Email: [renliziyuan@fyrb.com.cn](mailto:renliziyuan@fyrb.com.cn)

Shanghai Whyte Asia Pioneer Pharma is looking for instrumentation and automation engineers, chemical engineers, R&D managers, chemists, microbiologists, chemical analysts, process development chemists, chemical products sourcing executives, and web masters. Contact: Mr. Zhou at: 021-6120 3156

YOSO Electronics invites agents nationwide for its products of CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, COMBOs, CD-R/RWs, and DVD-R/RWs. Contact: Mr. Li at 0510-271 4856, 238 8339, 13812525708

The Southern Industrial Zone, Bincheng District, Binzhou, Shandong Province, is looking for two reps and five consultants in Beijing. Contact: Mr. Chen at 13561569235

(You are welcome to send positions offered and wanted info freely to: [ayi@ynet.com](mailto:ayi@ynet.com). Beijing Today does not take any responsibility for the accuracy and authenticity of the information published in this column.)

**A Beijing-based English newspaper is looking for reporters, freelancers and editors.**

**Chinese applicants should have university degrees in English or related majors and media experience.**

**Foreigners from the UK and US with relevant media experience preferred.**

**Please send your resumes and writing samples to: [hr@ynet.com](mailto:hr@ynet.com)**





The Great Court Cloisters, St Lucia campus

Splendid Australia

The University of Queensland (UQ) is the largest and oldest university in Queensland and is one of Australia's premier learning and research institutions.

## Strong Research Spells Plenty of Job Opportunities

The University of Queensland has consistently been short-listed for Australian Awards for University Teaching since they were established in 1997. By a variety of measures, it is one of the top three or four research universities in the country, status that was underlined last year when it celebrated the graduation of its 5,000th doctoral student. UQ is building a cluster of international-quality research centers and institutes that will keep it at the frontiers of emerging research fields, particularly bioscience.

University of Queensland graduates have a strong record of success in attaining very gainful employment. In recent years, the international standing of UQ has been reinforced with rapid growth in fee-paying students from abroad, as well as strong growth in postgraduate students.

Monica Turvey, the manager of the university's international admissions section and its international education directorate, took part in Splendid Australia last month, introducing education, campus life and services at UQ while chatting with Chinese students.

### University basics:

**Compared with the seven other universities in the Group of Eight, what do you think are the advantages of your university?**

—JackieZhang

Compared to the Group of Eight, UQ attracts the most funding for research and has the most research graduates. Additionally, the location of the university in Brisbane means cheaper costs of living for students, discounted travel on local transport, a sub-tropical climate and nice accommodation on campus.

**Does your university have its own academic culture?**

—black coffee

The university is a research-intensive, comprehensive university. So the academic culture is heavily influenced by the research culture.

**What are your standards for evaluating students?**

—pin

Students have to qualify for admission to the university on the basis of academic and English language qualifications.

The university employs a



The Great Court at night, St Lucia campus

range of assessment measures for students when they are studying here, including regular examinations, assignments and class tests.

**How many faculties do you have in your university?**

—hostayi

There are seven faculties: arts, social sciences, health, biological and chemical sciences, engineering and physical sciences, veterinary sciences and natural resources, business and law. Full details are available at [www.uq.edu.au](http://www.uq.edu.au).

**How many students are there in your university? What is the number of international students and Chinese students?**

—magic girl

There are 33,000 students and 6,500 international students from more than 100 countries. Our largest international student numbers are from Singapore, the US, Malaysia, China, Vietnam, and Germany. There are approximately 800 students from the PRC.

**How many campuses does your university have? Where are they located? Which campus has the most Chinese students?**

—black coffee

St. Lucia is the oldest and biggest campus situated 10 minutes from the center of Brisbane. Most Chinese students study here. Campuses are also located at Ipswich (one hour west of Brisbane) and Gatton (1 1/2 hours southwest of Brisbane) and the teaching hospital is located in the city of Brisbane.

**How many undergraduate and postgraduate courses does the University of Queensland offer? Which kinds of courses do Chinese students seem to prefer?**

—F777

The university has more than

6,000 courses and 400 programs available to students. Check these at [www.uq.edu.au/study](http://www.uq.edu.au/study).

Chinese students are well represented in many UQ programs, but the most popular programs tend to be in business and accounting.

**Do you have joint programs or students exchange programs with any Chinese universities?**

—telephone

The university has a range of collaborative arrangements with top Chinese universities, such as Beijing Normal University, Fudan University, Peking University, Wuhan University and many others. These links foster research collaboration, student exchanges and opportunities to progress to a UQ degree.

### Campus life:

**What kinds of student activities take place on campus? Are Chinese students active in participating in such events?**

—greentea

The university provides a great mix of recreational, social and sporting activities with world-class facilities. You can check out the wide range of clubs and societies on the Web at [www.uq.edu.au](http://www.uq.edu.au). The Chinese students association is very active on campus.

**I am sure that many students are fond of doing sports in their spare time. What are the sports facilities on campus like?**

—gym

All St. Lucia students are financial members of UQ Sport through payment of their student services charge. UQ Sport caters to a wide range of competitive, individual and recreational sports. In addition to the seven sporting ovals, it maintains tennis courts, netball courts, a heated swimming pool, a softball diamond, a

beach volleyball court and an indoor sports complex. Other facilities include a modern and comprehensively equipped fitness center and gym, squash courts, a sports medicine clinic and a well-stocked sports store.

**Is there any department on campus to help international students with their studies and to help them adjust to the new environment?**

—985h

Yes. The university's student support services office has a qualified staff experienced in assisting international students to adjust to studying and living in a new environment.

Personal counseling is a program run by student support services. It is a free and confidential service for all currently enrolled students of the University of Queensland. Counseling is available to assist those who may be facing crisis situations, adjustment difficulties or problems in living.

The student support services personal counseling program provides: free and confidential service dedicated to supporting students; somewhere to talk about problems ranging from everyday hassles to those that are seriously affecting your ability to function; a safe place to let off steam; ways to generate solutions to your problems; somebody who will listen to you; and

workshops and seminars which provide advice on some more common areas of concern for students such as anxiety, procrastination and stress management.

**What are the brightest spots on your campuses?**

—gorilla

Brisbane is the capital city of Queensland and there are many recreational and social activities available for young people. The main campus at St. Lucia is located about 15 minutes from the CBD. The campus is very large and has a range of facilities. You can check these out at [www.uq.edu.au](http://www.uq.edu.au). You can also check the website to find out which programs are available at which campuses.

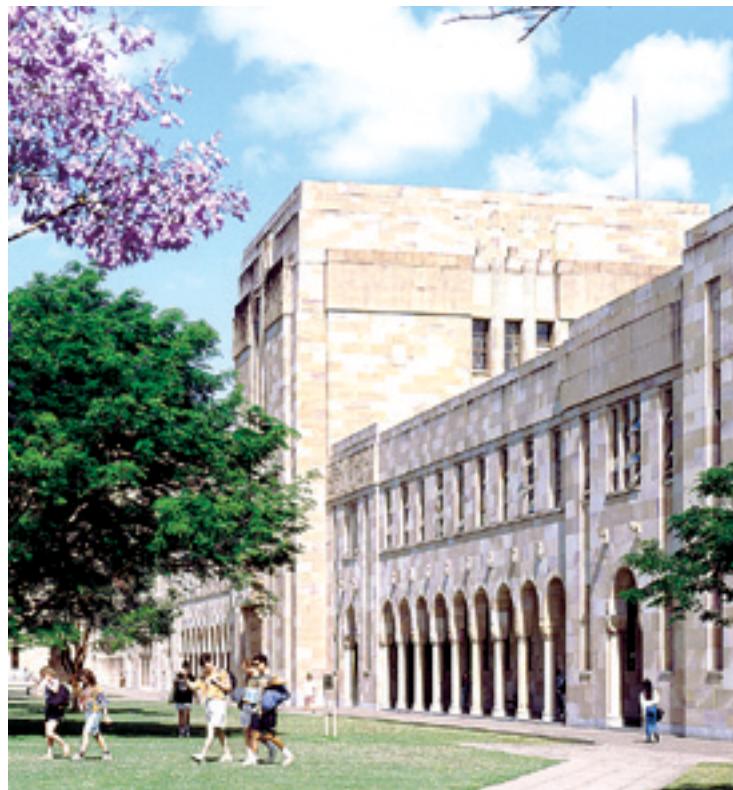
**What are the dormitories, as well as the facilities provided in rooms, like in the University of Queensland?**

—playgirl

Rental accommodation is the most popular accommodation choice among UQ students. There is usually a wide range of rental properties available at any one time and there are a number of on-line resources that list properties currently available for rent.

On-campus accommodation is only provided at the St. Lucia and Gatton campuses. There is no on-campus accommodation available at Ipswich.

(Edited by Zhang Nan)



The Great Court, St Lucia campus

Photos provided by University of Queensland

### Ask Ayi:

**Q: I'm an undergraduate student expecting to study abroad. Should I have a health check before leaving China?**

—Aner@cjyaner@163.com

**A:** Yes, you need to undergo a health check. It is not a requirement of universities themselves, but will be needed by the immigration authority of the country where you are going.

When you apply for a visa from the destination country, the embassy in Beijing will ask you to present a health declaration. When you arrive at the destination country, border immigration officers will also ask to see the document.

The best way to handle this is to get a health check at the hospital designated by the embassy of the country where you are going.

For some countries, you should receive vaccinations against common diseases, such as diphtheria, typhoid and meningitis. Ask at the hospital what vaccinations you need for your destination country.

**Q: I am a student of Spanish in Beijing and hope to go to South America, probably Argentina. Can you offer some information or suggestions?**

—wangyue1218@sohu.com

**A:** You are choosing an interesting, smart path. For one thing, education costs in Argentina are much cheaper than programs in Europe. A degree program in Argentina, whether undergraduate or post-graduate, should come in around \$2,000 a year.

A growing number of Chinese are heading to South America for business or to live, but not as many go to study. International students like you are sure to be welcomed.

Schools on the continent provide many cutting-edge and niche courses and programs worth studying. For instance, the Universidad del Salvador (University of Salvador) provides many independent and detailed medical programs, as well as interesting degrees in deaf mute education, pre-school education, investigative journalism, legislative studies, psychological analysis and social communications.

Undergraduate study in Argentina takes four year and post-graduate study takes two years.

Many language schools offer Spanish language courses, and universities also have programs.

**Q: I know there is a university in Australia called Central Queensland University. Does it have any relation to the University of Queensland?**

—zjr0620

**A:** There is no connection between Central Queensland University and the University of Queensland. They are two quite separate and different universities. UQ is the oldest university in the state of Queensland and the third oldest in Australia.

(Edited by Zhang Nan and Ayi)

## New Oriental Teachers Set Out on Dream Journey

By Zhang Nan

The one-year Dream Journey activity, a driving lecture organized by New Oriental Education & Technology Group, Sina.com and more than 100 universities, started last weekend.

In the activity, some New Oriental teachers, including school founder Yu Minhong, Wang Qiang and Xu Xiaoping, will drive themselves around China, visiting 50 cities and giving lectures at more than 100 universities nationwide.

The teachers will talk about topics including university academics, student life, careers and studying abroad, with the intention of communicating with students and inspiring them to approach their studies and future with enthusiasm. They will also help students improve their English study skills.

In addition, New Oriental will establish New Oriental Youth Clubs at chosen universities, give students free copies of the New Oriental Newspaper and donate books to create New Oriental Book Corners.



# Passage to India

By Chu Meng

Over the past couple of years, clothes from India and Pakistan have become all the rage in the capital. And for good reason – China's neighbors produce beautiful cloth, embroidery, tailored clothing and jewelry. Now Beijingers with an eye for the exotic have a new place to shop in the Bindiya shop, an Indian and Pakistani clothing specialist in the massive Jinyuan New Yansha mall.

The shop stocks a wide range of spectacular *saris*, traditional Indian dresses that can be worn many ways. *Saris*, rectangular pieces of cloth around five meters long, come in an wide variety of materials, from cotton and silk to synthetic fibers, and

all manner of colors and patterns. Bindiya's owner explained that the sari has stayed popular in India for centuries because of its perfect simplicity and practical comfort, combined with its feeling of sensual luxury. There is no question that the sari is one of the world's most versatile garments.

More popular in Pakistan is the two-piece *salwar kameez*, and Bindiya also offers an interesting selection. These too come in a rainbow of fabrics and colors – shimmering silk, fine, gauzy cotton, grey wools, pastels and floral patterns. Arguably the most beautiful in the store is one long shirt and pants combo elaborately embroidered with golden and copper threads, inlaid with colorful stones and finished with a richly tasseled border. It is enough to make every girl's

dream of being a princess come true. The shopkeeper explained the way a Pakistani woman wears her *salwar kameez*, and what kind, is very indicative of her status, age, region and home area.

The store is full of other kinds of interesting, stylish clothes, such as the *choli*, a tight-fitting, short blouse than stops over the stomach, and the *sherwani*, a sharp, coat-like garment for men. Shelves and display cases also contain a range of jewelry and accessories, embroidered shoes and furniture that are worth close inspection for a feel of the Subcontinent.

**Where:** 4017, Juran Furnishing, New Yansha Mall, Shijicheng, Haidian

**Open:** 9 am - 10 pm

**Tel:** 8887 5513

—Chasing Beauty—



MUCH A'DO

By Wang Yao

When the first whiff of spring hit the air, I started thinking about getting my hair permed and nourished for a whole new look. The long winter left my hair dry, crisp and faded, and many a hairdresser has complained that my hair is hard to deal with. A friend recommended I check out Cool Hairstyle to try their Korean Arte brand products to see whether they could restore my hair's health.

The hairdresser first gave my hair a "dry clean" with a skillful scalpal massage, which he said was good for stimulating blood circulation, which would in turn allow my scalp and hair to absorb more goodness from the shampoo. To get my dry hair to take to the perming liquid, he then suggested using Arte Repaire Nourisher LPP to replace some of the strands' lost protein and essential moisture. In no time, my hair felt softer and its color was lighter and more lustrous. As the hairdresser was preparing the perming equipment, I combed through my hair and was pleased to find it smooth and silky.

With no further ado, the perm began. The hairdresser said my hair was hollow, malnourished and so crisp that ordinary perming liquid would have an adverse reaction of irritating my hair and even causing some of it too fall out. So together we chose Porcelain-brand perming liquid, said to be the most popular product of its kind in Korea and Japan because it does the least harm to hair while its effects last and last.

My guy first layered my hair to match my figure and face into an "eruptive" hairstyle with a young, punk look. He then used Arte perming liquid to cover my hair and employed some special thick sticks to set the curls. These were particularly unusual because they contained their own internal heaters, meaning I did not have to suffer the sweat-inducing discomfort of a normal perm heater. My scalp could still feel the heat, but it was very mild and even slightly soothing.

After about 40 minutes, the hairdresser dropped on some shaping liquid, also from Arte brand. While most perm liquids have a caustic smell, the Arte product had an aromatic, almost minty fragrance that was quite pleasant.

When another 20 minutes had passed by, the hairdresser unrolled the curlers and helped me wash my new do. When I walked into the salon, my hair was dry and lifeless – when he was done, it felt light and smooth like silk. After the hairdresser dried my hair, it fell into natural soft curls and folds. It looks cool and has proven surprisingly easy to manage. Not a bad result for 880 yuan.

**Where:** North gate of Beijing International Studies University, No. 1, Dingfuzhuang Nanli, Chaoyang

**Open:** 9 am - 10:30 pm

**Tel:** 6579 0973

By Wang Yao

The designers of Hong Kong's Macro Maria brand of children's clothes integrate European styles and Italian accessories to create garments that look like shrunken versions of adult couture.

A fine example is a dark pink knee-length coat for girls made of warm, comfortable wool and lined with soft, white cotton. A waistband

## Little Princesses

are lightened with the presence of some purple flowers and the liner is made of hypoallergenic cotton. The neck is cut into a naval collar, with big triangles of dark pink. (525 yuan for the top, 425 yuan for the skirt).

Top quality trousers and coats for boys are also available.

**Where:** 4066, fourth floor, Jinyuan New Yansha Mall, No. 1 Yuandadu, Haidian

**Open:** 10 am - 9 pm

## Bed Spreads



Photos by Wang Yao

By Wang Yao

Parents looking for the best furnishing for their children's rooms need look no further than Colombini, an Italian furniture brand that is exclusively to kids and teenagers and has set up its first local store in the New Yansha Mall. Colombini pieces come in colors and styles sure to appeal to kids, while they are safe and sturdy enough to put up with plenty of horsing around.

The Golf 412 bunk-bed comes in bright red, with a ladder leading to a top perch that any child would love to call his or her own. A railing on the side erases fears kids will roll off. Underneath the bed is a cabinet with four drawers and plenty of shelves designed to store all kinds of kid things, like books, toys, clothes and more. There is also a sturdy desk made of thick, red wood with adjustable height settings so children of different ages can do their homework in style.

The even more practical Golf 408 bunk bed stands high, offering access to the bed via a fun wooden ladder and loads of storage. Under the bed stand three footed wardrobes, and even the ladder's steps house bright red drawers.

The Golf 423 is designed to appeal to those rare more-than-one child families. This set features two beds so that kids sharing a room can get a good night's sleep while enjoying maximum space. The mattresses are divided by shelves and drawers, making it a multi-functional unit.

Volo series beds are aimed to provide the style and privacy that teenagers demand. Most come in natural wood color or painted red, yellow or deep blue. A natural match to the beds is the Volo 163 floor lamp, which stands on a triangular base and adds light and class to a room with its yellow glass lampshade hung from a thin hook.

**Where:** 3313, Juran Furnishing, New Yansha Mall

**Open:** 9 am - 10 pm

**Tel:** 8887 3380

tapers the coat to make young wearers look tall, while the pleated bottom adds a fun, youthful touch. To set off the coat's dark pink hue, a good match is a short scarf made of white rabbit fur. The coat fetches 1,285 yuan and the scarf 165 yuan.

Another coat, more kiddy than the fancy dark pink one, shows clear influence of popular women's brand ONLY. The main material is dark blue denim, cut into a sharp taper to show off girls' slender waists and arms. The collar and trim are decorated in light pink with a matching bow. On the breast, the brand's name is spelled out in glittering rhinestones. Of course, that level of design comes at a price, in this case 895 yuan.

No girl will be able to resist an ensemble of a pink skirt matched with a velvet top that features a shimmering leopard skin pattern. The main colors





Activities

Visit Contemporary Artists – Village in Changping County with Chinese Culture Club (CCC)

Go with CCC to visit some artists' homes and studios in the suburbs of Beijing and learn the current trends in traditional painting, sculpture and other forms. Unlike the freelance artists in Tongzhou Song Zhuang Village, these artists are mostly academic painters with established careers. (Please bring your own lunch for this tour)

Meet at the CCC (29, Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang) to get on the bus **When:** 9 am, Sunday **Cost:** 150 yuan (includes transportation) **Tel:** 6432 9341 (Reservation essential)

Exhibitions



Luan Xiaojie's Big Boy Series

Luan Xiaojie's previous Boy series featured two boys wearing earrings and bras as they played with chairs, spools of thread and mirrors. This series expresses a sense of loneliness and the weakness of people in modern society.

**Where:** Qin Gallery, 1-1 E Enjoy Paradise, Huaweiili, North of Beijing Curio City, Chaoyang **When:** daily 9:30 am – 7 pm until March 31 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461



Fashion and Tradition

Artist Suo Tan expresses his understanding of today's art and life with traditional elements like cultural patterns, totems, birds and flowers. On show are carefully-crafted works combining elements of fashion and tradition. Vivid images of ordinary people in today's society working in different professions with varied gestures are portrayed with an exaggerated and humorous touch.

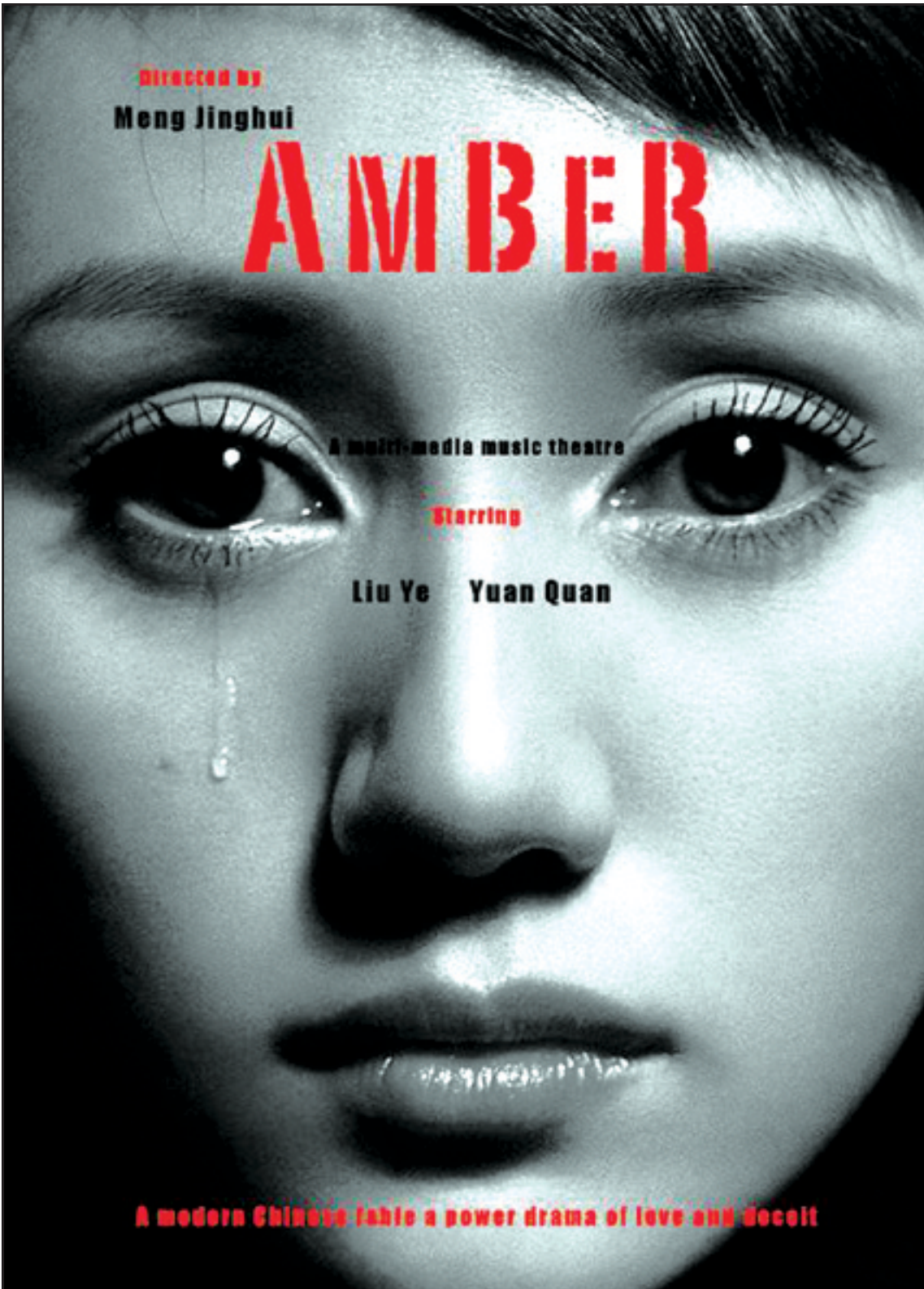
**Where:** Fa Fa Gallery, 1 Xiangjiang Beilu, Jingshun Lu, Chaoyang **When:** daily 10:30 am – 8 pm until March 31 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8430 2587



Meet in Beijing

The hutongs of Beijing are recognized as the embodiment of an older time. This show will introduce works by three outsiders, Jiangxi native Kuang Han, Huang Youwei from Hunan and Dalian native Yu Jiantao, who have been attracted deeply by the culture of Beijing hutongs and have not only settled in Beijing, but attempted to portray the Beijing hutongs from the perspective of an outsider.

**Where:** Wan Fung Art Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** daily 10 am – 6 pm, March 19-30 (noon – 6 pm on Monday) **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6523 3320



Multimedia Musical: Amber

Amber is a musical drama directed by Meng Jinghui who played an important role in the development of contemporary drama in China, starring Liu Ye (winner of the Golden Horse Award for Best Actor and winner of the Golden Rooster Award for Best Actor). The story is about a man who dies in an accident and has his heart transplanted into the body of another man who is a rogue. The girlfriend of the deceased believes she can help the rogue redeem his soul. Performed in Mandarin with English and Chinese subtitles.

**Where:** Poly Theatre, 1/F, Poly Plaza, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng **When:** 7:30 pm, March 25 – April 3 **Admission:** 80-580 yuan **Tel:** 6500 1188 ext. 5126



Zhang Yue's Solo Exhibition

Former air hostess Zhang Yue went from making random sketches to studying oil painting at Beijing Normal University. In 1996 she went to America to further her studies. Her abstract oils are now popular in the galleries of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

**Where:** East Gallery, Deshengmen Watchtower, Bei Erhuan Zhonglu, Xicheng **When:** daily 9 am – 5:30 pm, March 19-31 (closed on Monday) **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8201 4962

Movies



El Bolero de Raquel

Directed by Miguel M. Delgado, starring Cantinflas, Paquito Fernandez and Manolo Saavedra. At his friend's funeral, a destitute young man is left in charge of the dead man's young son by the widow. He then meets the boy's teacher, who convinces him that he, too,

should return to school.

**Where:** Mexican Embassy, 5 Sanlitun Dongjie, Chaoyang **When:** 7:30 pm, March 23 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2244



The Heart is Elsewhere

Directed by Pupi Avati, starring Neri Marcorè and Giancarlo Giannini. Nello Balocchi, a 35-year-old teacher of Greek and Latin, is invited to Bologna by his father, the owner of the Papal tailor's shop in Rome. His father hopes he will find a soul mate in Bologna and produce an heir for the business.

**Where:** Italian Embassy, 2 Dong'erjie, Sanlitun, Chaoyang **When:** 7:30 pm, March 24 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187

A World without Thieves

Directed by Feng Xiaogang, starring Andy Lau, Rene Liu, Ge You and Wang Baoqiang. The story revolves around a couple, Wang Bo and Wang Li, who swindle their way around China. One day at a train station they befriend Sha Gen, a young migrant worker who has worked five years in a Tibetan monastery and saved 60,000 yuan. Gen is returning home to build a new life and get married. Though carrying a substantial amount of money, he naively believes he won't be harmed.

**Where:** Cherry Lane Movies Theater, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** 8 pm, tonight and Saturday **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 13501251303

Performances

Hi, Lovely

The plot tells of how a kid named "Lovely" wants to be himself instead of being a cute bookworm who just follows the role models set up by his parents. After he and his parents temporarily exchange roles, they understand each other better, and head for a brighter future.

**Where:** Haidian Theatre, 28 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian **When:** 2:30 pm and 7:30 pm, till Sunday **Admission:** 40-380 yuan **Tel:** 6254 6839

Kaishi Daji

Directed by veteran artist Gu Wei. Adapted from Lao She's novel, Kaishi Daji is about the social life of a group of people who live in Wuzhou in the 1930s. Performed by the People's Art Theater.

**Where:** Capital Theater, 22 Wangfujing, Dongcheng **When:** 7:30 pm, March 23 – April 3 **Admission:** 80-280 yuan **Tel:** 6524 9847

Symphony with Guitar

Under the baton of Italian conductor Stefano Mazzoleni, the Beijing Symphony Orchestra will hold a symphonic concert. Massimo Scattolin will perform the guitar solos. Programme: Witold Lutoslawski's *Chain*, Stravinsky's *Petrushka* and Fabio Vachi's *Nocturne Minor Concerto*.

**Where:** Forbidden City Concert Hall, inside Zhongshan Park, Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng **When:** 7:30 pm, Saturday **Admission:** 30-380 yuan **Tel:** 6559 8285

Personal Classifieds

Accommodation

A courtyard with two trees is seeking decent tenants! Deep in one of Beijing's most traditional hutong, within the second ring road and near Dongzhimen, the courtyard will be a cozy home and a place for any creative work. **Contact:** Ema, 13910689921

New apartment located at Lido commercial area for rent. One bedroom of 65 square meters; fully furnished. 3,000 yuan per month. **Contact:** 365vip@21cn.com, 13601267579

High quality apartment near Lido commercial community, convenient transportation with all new furniture and electrical equipment, for rent. No agents. **Contact:** Mr. Guo, 13601267579

Language Exchange

Carol, working at a media company, is looking for an English or French native speaker. **Contact:** lapindavril@yahoo.com.cn

Professional Help

Kevin Liu, who has a bachelor's degree in Economic Law, wants to find a job in marketing and foreign trade. Skills include knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point and Front Page. **Contact:** 13718691689, email: lkchn@sina.com.cn

Jane Kang, an investment project manager in Tsinghua Venture Capital Management Ltd., is looking for a position in the capital management field. **Contact:** 13701223476, email: garfieldkang@sina.com

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TV and Radio Highlights

HBO	
18 Friday	
Bad Boys II	9 pm
19 Saturday	
The Rundown	9 pm
20 Sunday	
The Devil's Own	8 pm
21 Monday	
The Quick and the Dead	9 pm
22 Tuesday	
Bulletproof	8:40 pm
23 Wednesday	
Tears of the Sun	9 pm
24 Thursday	
Intolerable Cruelty	9 pm
CCTV-9	
Monday – Friday	
Around China	6:30 am
Culture Express	8:30 am
Nature and Science /	
Chinese Civilization	11:30 am
Culture Express	2:30 pm
Nature and Science /	
Chinese Civilization	5:30 pm
Dialogue	7:30 pm
News Updates /	
Asia Today	8 pm
Sports Scene	11:15 pm
Saturday	
Travelogue	9:30 am
Center Stage	11:30 am
Sunday	
Sports Weekend	10 am
Documentary	10:30 am
This Week	12:30 am
China Radio International 91.5 FM	
Monday – Friday	
Easy FM Afternoon	2-7 pm
Fun in Beijing	5-5:30 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Saturday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Euro Hit 40	12:05-1 pm
Musique Sans Frontières	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Sunday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Jazz Beat	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language-exchange and accommodation information for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 6590 2518

By Zhang Jianzhong



DJ Tatiana

If you don't know about DJ Tatiana Alvarez yet you will. This former model/actress plays a Tribal/Funky House/Progressive mix, with a VJ Raven visual show and a scintillating dance performance.

**Where:** Angel Club, 6 Gongti Xilu, Chaoyang **When:** 11 pm, Saturday **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6552 8888

Jams

DJ Luke Chable

Chable is here on a promotional tour for his new album, "Therapy Sessions." This front rank Aussie DJ has collaborated with some of the hippest names, including Bjork, Gus Gus and John Digweed.

**Where:** Babyface Bar, 6 Gongti Xilu, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm, tonight **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8315 1201

Get Out Your Baguettes

French pop band Jul hit the stage for two nights in a row. They pay homage to the lovable 60s and 70s era French pop and folk chansons. Also a part of the endearing French culture year.

**Where:** Yugong Yishan Bar, 1 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm, tonight and Saturday **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6415 0687



# Flowers Bloom in Luoping

By Hester Xu and Arron Chang

**T**he fact that Luoping, Yunnan Province holds the largest stock of rapeseed in China might not immediately inspire you to pack your bags and get on the next train headed that way. But the yellow rape, or canola, flower is truly a scene not to be missed by anyone visiting this part of China in early spring.

Climbing the Golden Rooster Peak in the warm spring when the flowers bloom, you'll be awed by the sight of endless expanses of gold-colored fields reaching to the horizon, with slender hills and villages dotted among them and winding roads and rivers crossing through.

Call it a lucky day if you happen to see a traditional wedding ceremony in procession, making the scene

*Famous for its breathtaking scenery and rich cultural heritage of the ethnic minorities who have lived there for generations, Luoping is a place of magnificent waterfalls, unfathomable valleys, towering mountain peaks, deep forest, winding rivers and jade-colored lakes.*

even more colorful, with decorated carts moving among the flowers and red wedding outfits contrasting the glowing yellow.

The people of a variety of ethnic minorities living in this area still maintain their

time-honored traditions.

On the second day of the second lunar month, youths of the Buyi, Shui, Zhuang and Yi minorities living near Jiulong (nine dragons) River gather in Luoping to sing songs in antiphonal style to choose their loved ones. *Weaponry Dance*, *Lion Dance*, *Stilt Dance* and *Wild Hairy Man's Dance* are also performed at the gathering.

One month later, when the Antiphonal Singing Festival is held in the scenic Duoyihe, some 10 miles southeast of Luoping County, it becomes a spectacle attracting people from near and far.

After Spring Festival, Luoping becomes a sea of fragrant, golden flowers. The gentle swaying of the flowers in the early spring breeze creates the surreal illusion of Luoping town rising and falling in the flowers like a small island in the sea.

Standing on top of Golden Rooster Mountain at sunrise, early birds will be greeted by a perfect picture of a true fairyland: The thin mist has just lifted, golden shafts of sunlight strike end-

less expanses of golden fields of flowers, punctuated by small hills, strands of cooking smoke coil slowly into the sky from the houses in the villages and beekeepers begin to stir among the flowers.

## Long and winding Duoyi River

With Luochan County in Yunnan to the west, Xingyi, in Guizhou, to the east and Xili County, Guangxi to the south, Sanjiangkou (mouth of three rivers) is the confluence of the Nanpan, Huangni and Duoyi rivers.

The river is wide here, flowing past the stone slate bank, the clear and murky water flowing in parallel streams but never seeming to mix, providing an open view of Duoyi village.

Around the village stand ancient trees, lush bamboo lines the walls, and banana trees stand along the road side. Clear springs gurgle along the riverside and orchards grow thick in front of the houses.

In front of the village, three waterfalls plunge down the 300 meter-long river course, known as Crooked Waterfall, Thunder God Waterfall and Slate Platform Waterfall. On the west side of Sanjiangkou, the Duoyi River tumbles down in a magnificent seven tiers to the deep valley below.

A big windmill turns slowly while small children swim and frolic naked in the river. Women of the Buyi nationality, wearing their distinctive blue-dyed clothes, do their laundry and grill fish by the riverside, bamboo rafts glide effortlessly on the bright surface of the river and hundreds of watermill wheels spin merrily in the current, sending sprays of water into the air.

Tourists can travel alongside the Duoyi River on the back of a readily available hired tricycle. Nostrils filled with the fragrance of the rice paddies, bumping along the country road surrounded by green mountains, jump off to try some grilled fish and potatoes and buy a wreath of flowers from the Buyi women.

The culinary highlight though, is the five-color rice. To make it, the Buyi women go to the mountains to collect flowers, leaves and grass roots, which they boil in separate pots and put in glutinous rice balls to make the five colors of red, yellow, blue, black and purple. After the rice balls are steamed, they are put in a bowl and dressed with honey.

The locals believe that this dish clears away heat and toxic materials from the body.

## Lubuge

Sometimes called the Small Three Gorges, Lubuge is situated some 30 miles east of Luoping

County. Besides the fancifully named Lion Gorge, Diling (monkey) Gorge, Twin Elephant Gorge rising straight up into the sky, and the awesome Flying Dragon Fall, Lubuge is also famous for the Ten Thousand Peaks Lake, where an artificial lake was created for the Lubuge hydropower station.

## Nine-Dragon Waterfall

According to a local legend, a divine dragon once fought the spirit of a bronze drum living in the river. After defeating the evil spirit, the dragon stayed to guard the river and protect the people living by the water.

The river is fed by streams from the mountains behind Baila peak. Over the years, the water has eroded and chiselled nine waterfalls in 10 tiers along the riverbed in various sizes and shapes. During the rainy season, the rumbling of the torrents can be heard several miles away like pealing thunder.

In the dry season of the winter, the waterfalls become thin curtains hanging on the river ledge, splashing and crashing down the river valley. Linking the waterfalls are numerous shoals and rapids in different shapes, some broad, some exquisite and beautiful.

## Getting there

The easiest way is to take a direct shuttle bus to Luoping from Kunming's Juhua Station. The trip takes 4-5 hours and tickets cost 25-33 yuan.

Alternatively, take a train from Kunming to Luxi (17-30 yuan), and then a bus to Luoping (16 yuan).

## Accommodation

Luoping has numerous hotels and hostels. Room prices range from 30 to 200 yuan. Biyuan Inn on Xiguan Road is a good bargain, with single rooms for only 30 yuan.

## Tips

One of the pleasures of visiting Luoping is sampling the local snack food. Don't miss the gingko seeds fried with diced meat and Buyi glutinous rice paste wrapped in bamboo.

When the rape flowers are blooming, try a cold dish of fresh flower buds, or fried flowers. At night, there are many food stands along the promenade opposite Xinhua Bookstore on Zhenxing Road.

Look out for rape flower honey, flue-cured tobacco, ginger, dried bamboo shoots, tea, rape seed oil, wine and so on. Don't forget to bargain if you want to buy Buyi five-color rice, painted eggs, blue dyed clothes, oil paper umbrellas, toy water wheels or a water pipe.

And finally, the sun light can be particularly strong, so bring your parasol and sunscreen.



Anning, Yunnan



Anshun, Guizhou



## Other Sites to See Rape Flowers

### Yingjiang, Yunnan

Yellow rape flowers frame the lush fields by the river, sugar cane gives off a sweet fragrance in the breeze, Yingjiang is a typical scene of South China. The Binglang River flows swiftly here, and there are series of beautiful waterfalls.

### Wuyuan, Jiangxi

Often described as "the most beautiful village in China," Wuyuan still preserves the original appearance of an ancient village with narrow trails paved with stone slate winding through the fields, arched stone bridges over small creeks and white walled, black roofed farmhouses sparsely dotting large swathes of rape flower fields in the distance.

### Kaiyang, Guizhou

The rape flowers in Kaiyang grow in the mountains. At the entrance of Nanjiang Valley, an unpaved road zig-zags down the mountain ridge and a river catches the sunlight in the valley. The flowers grow on both sides of the road, extending for several miles.

### Peach Flower Creek, Sichuan

In March, the flowers are already in full bloom. In the fields, the branches of peach tree cast long shadows on the ground, the creeks are clear and shallow. Drinking a cup of fragrant tea, it is such an enjoyable experience to watch an interplay of the yellow flowers, the green wheat seedlings, the sparkling ponds and grey roofed farmhouses.

### Yangzhou

Yangzhou looks just like a Chinese painting in springtime and the yellow of the flowers looks less intense. In early spring, flowers paint the fields yellow and green. When April arrives, yellow flowers stretch to the horizon, interrupted only by a few small hills and villages.